



## Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) on Zoom November 7, 2023



Teresa Cheung, DEI Officer  
Ogie Strogatz, Co-President  
Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek Branch

DEI (Diversity, Equity Inclusion) on Zoom  
DAW (Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek) Branch  
AAUW (American Association of University Women)

November 7, 2023. 6:00-7:30 pm

Teresa Cheung, DEO Officer  
Ogie Strogatz, Co-President

# Agenda

- DAW-AAUW Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) Purpose and Approach
- Getting Started with Difficult Conversations
- Key Terms
  - Diversity
  - Equity
  - Inclusion
  - Micro-aggression
- Discussion & Responding to Micro-aggression: “I once was a normal person” email



## DAW DEI Committee: Overarching Purpose

AAUW is dedicated to helping members become more comfortable sharing their perspectives outside of diversity trainings and to address diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in all aspects of their work and lives.

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/dei-toolkit/>



AAUW is dedicated to helping members become more comfortable sharing their perspectives outside of diversity trainings and to address diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in all aspects of their work and lives. We seek to encourage ongoing dialogue that will inspire all members to bring these values to their personal and professional interactions. Within AAUW, our goal is to turn these conversations into actionable goals and strategies for each branch. We seek to help members understand how inclusion factors into every decision made in the branch and in their lives. AAUW hopes to bring inclusion to the workplace, including transparent advancement and opportunities for development.”\*

## DAW DEI Committee: Operational Approach

- Meet monthly, either via Zoom or in person, to help support inclusive participation by all branch members.
  - DEI (Diversity Equity Inclusion) on Zoom
  - DEI (Diversity Equity Inclusion) around the Table
- Participate in AAUW DEI online meetings convened at the CA-AAUW and National levels.
- Welcome proposed topics from members for discussion or activity (e.g. an incident recently experienced or observed by a member; an article, blog, speaker, or movie that sparked a new perspective).
- Post articles and or activities in our branch's newsletter, *The Advocate*.
- Speak at the branch's Third Thursday Membership Meeting
- Plan a program dedicated to DEI for our branch monthly meeting.



- DEI Committee member will participate in and report back on all AAUW DEI online meetings convened at the state and/or national levels.
- The DEI Committee will meet monthly, either via Zoom or in person, to help support inclusive participation by all branch members.
- Meetings will include:
  - Updates regarding AAUW national and state-level DEI guidance, and
  - Discussion to cultivate awareness, understanding and action about DEI at the local level.
- Branch members are welcome to propose topics for discussion (e.g. an incident recently experienced or observed by a member that runs counter to diversity, equity, and inclusion; an article, blog, speaker, or movie that sparked a new perspective for a member regarding DEI; a topic covered during a statewide or national DEI meeting).
- The DEI Officer will make the final decisions regarding meeting agendas, including topic(s) to be covered, who will facilitate, questions to structure and prompt group discussion, etc.
- The DEI Officer/Committee will post an article, in each month's edition of the Advocate.

- The DEI Team will work on securing time on the agenda at the branch's Third Thursday Membership Meetings (e.g. brief announcements during the business portion of the meeting, or a program dedicated to DEI, or soliciting participation from a group of members to represent the branch at a community-based event promoting DEI, for example, an anti-hate rally).

# Getting Started with Difficult Conversations

## Setting Ground Rules/Community Agreements

- **Listen actively – respect others when they are talking.**
  - Seek to understand, more than to be understood; 100% listening vs. waiting to respond
  - Step up; step back
  - Respect silence; don't force yourself to fill silence, it can indicate thought and process
- Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing (“I” instead of “they,” “we,” and “you”).
- Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions, **but refrain from personal attacks; focus on ideas.**
- Participate to the fullest of your ability; community growth depends on the inclusion of every voice.
- Instead of invalidating somebody else's story with your own spin on her/his experience, share your own story and experience.
- **The goal is not to agree; it is to gain deeper understanding.**
- Be conscious of body language and nonverbal responses; they can be as disrespectful as words.
- Uphold confidentiality; treat the candor of others as a gift.
- Lean into discomfort; push yourself to be open to new ideas and experiences even if initially uncomfortable.



# Getting Started with Difficult Conversations

## Best Practices for Managing Conflict

- Attempt to pursue a common goal, rather than individual goals.
- Openly and honestly communicate with everyone.
- Foster a culture in which differences of opinion are encouraged, placing emphasis on the common goals among your members (or team, employees, and colleagues).
- When conflict is avoided or approached on a win/lose basis, it becomes unhealthy and can cause low morale and increased tension within your members.

## Key Terms – Diversity

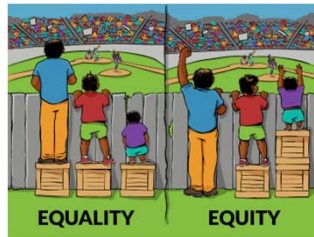
- Variety; characteristics, the dimensions that make each of us unique
- Recognizing what makes us different and unique is important.
- Without taking diversity into consideration, we run the risk of excluding some individuals.



## Key Terms – Equity

- Everyone having equal access to what they need to be successful; those needs can be quite different
- Equity (fairness in the distribution of resources) vs. equality (identical resources distributed to everyone)

### Equality vs. Equity



source: Interaction Institute for Social Change | Artist: Angus Maguire

## Key Terms - Inclusion

- Behaviors and actions that make us feel welcomed
- An environment that creates a sense of belonging, where everyone feels welcomed, appreciated, respected, and included, is essential for the success of diversity efforts.
- As diversity advocate Verna Myers once said, “*Diversity is being invited to the party, and inclusion is being asked to dance.*” If you don’t have both, neither works.



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- An environment that creates a sense of belonging, where everyone feels welcomed, appreciated, respected, and included, is essential for the success of diversity efforts.
  - To be truly inclusive, we often have to change the culture.
  - Culture shifts can make people uncomfortable or give the sense that they are losing something.
  - But the opposite is true: Research suggests that environments where people feel supported, welcomed, respected and valued are actually more productive; everyone feels a greater connection to the organization’s mission.
- As diversity advocate Verna Myers once said, “*Diversity is being invited to the party, and inclusion is being asked to dance.*” If you don’t have both, neither works.

## Key Terms - Microaggression/Macroaggression

- Microaggression: a individual's comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member/members of a marginalized group (such as a racial minority); 1:1 interaction
- Microaggressions are based on stereotypes and tied to implicit bias.
- Macroaggression: biased programs, policies, practices, or customs at institutional or systemic level; group impact



- Microaggression: a individual's comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member/members of a marginalized group (such as a racial minority); 1:1 interaction
- Microaggressions are based on stereotypes and tied to implicit bias.
- Although microaggressions often are not intended to harm, intent is not the same as impact. Microaggressions can have serious negative impacts on those who experience them
- Addressing one's own microaggressions
  - Examine your own language and biases
  - If someone accuses you of perpetrating a microaggression, listen, don't get defensive, apologize, and continue to learn and examine your biases so that you don't make the same mistake.

## Microaggression: Meta-communication\*

- Every microaggression has a meta-communication or message that is covertly or subtly conveyed
- Before you can begin to dismantle microaggressions, you must first make the meta-communication explicit

\*source: AAUW, [“The Microintervention Anti-bias Workshop”](#)



## Microaggression: Barriers to Responding\*

### Reality check

- Did anyone else notice?
- Will they say I'm too sensitive?
- Second-guessing; did s/he say what I think s/he said?
- "Freeze effect"; thinking, thinking, then the moment passes

### But what if. . .

- I get fired/excluded?
- S/he stops being my friend?
- They'll just think I'm being aggressive?
- I don't know what I would say?

### The Catch 22

- If I do respond there may be negative consequences
- If I don't respond there may be a psychological toll
- Often thinking more about the former than the latter. . .

\*source: AAUW, ["The Microintervention Anti-bias Workshop"](#)



## “I Once Was A Normal Person” Email

- What is the meta-communication that you draw from the email message? What does the sender want us to understand?
- Are there particular barriers to responding that come to mind?
- How should we handle this?
  - Micro-intervention goals?
  - Based on the goals, what tactic(s) do you recommend?

**A study in Microaggression: *I ONCE WAS A NORMAL PERSON:***

*I used to think I was pretty much just a regular person, but I was born white, into a two-parent household which now, whether I like it or not, makes me privileged, a racist and responsible for slavery.*

*I am a fiscal and moral conservative, which by today's standards, makes me a fascist because I plan, budget and support myself.*

*I went to school for 19 years and have always held a job. But I now find out that I am not here because I earned it, but because I was "advantaged".*

*I am heterosexual, which according to gay folks, now makes me a homophobic.*

*I am not a Muslim, which now labels me as an infidel.*

*I am older than 65, making me a useless dinosaur who doesn't understand Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or Snapchat.*

*I think, and I reason, and I doubt most of what the 'mainstream' media tells me, which makes me a Right-Wing conspiracy nut.*

*I am proud of my heritage and our inclusive culture, making me a xenophobe.*

*I believe in hard work, fair pay and fair reward according to each individual's merits, which today makes me an anti-socialist.*

*I believe our system guarantees freedom of effort not freedom of outcome or subsidies which must make me a borderline sociopath.*

*I believe in the defense and protection of my nation for and by all citizens, now making me a militant.*

*I am proud of our flag, what it stands for and the many who died to let it fly, so I STAND during our National Anthem - so I must be a radical.*

*Funny - it all took place over the last decade! (Some Reaction: Not True! Propaganda! Author throwing a fit, the world is not going his/her way)*

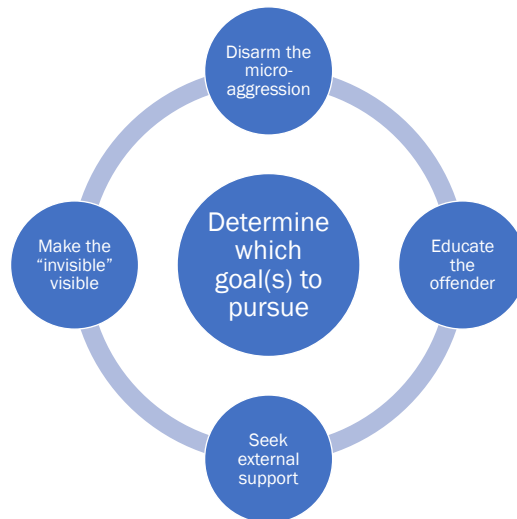


## Microaggression & Meta-communication

- What is your reaction when you read this?
- What is the message that is covertly or subtly conveyed in the “I Once Was a Normal Person email” ?



## Microaggression: Micro-intervention Goals\*



\*source: AAUW, ["The Microintervention Anti-bias Workshop"](#)



## Micro-intervention Goal: Disarm the microaggression\*

- Objective: to prevent a likely microaggression (e.g. offensive joke being told at a party)
- Determine what the meta-communication is; then, potential tactics. . .
  - Express disagreement
  - State your values and set limits
  - Use an exclamation (“ouch”, “naaahh, just no”)

\*source: AAUW, [“The Microintervention Anti-bias Workshop”](#)

## Micro-intervention Goal: Make the “invisible” visible\*

- Objective: to interrupt the microaggression with a brief response
- What feels safe/what feels good to you
  - Aim to defend yourself (if a target) or provide support (if an ally or bystander), but do not put yourself at risk
  - Consider the consequences if you do respond; if you don't
- Determine what the meta-communication is; then, potential tactics. . .
  - Find a way to undermine or negate the meta-communication
    - As an ally or bystander, be mindful about when it's appropriate to engage, vs. when you're taking away power from the target
    - Targets often are waiting to feel that there is someone on their side
    - Show the target that “I'm with you; I saw that; I'll back you up”
  - Challenge the stereotype
  - Ask for clarification (“What was that all about?” “What's going on?”)

\*source: AAUW, [“The Microintervention Anti-bias Workshop”](#)



## Micro-intervention Goal: Educate the Offender\*

- Reserve for people whom you feel are worth the investment of your emotional labor, and you want to be part of that learning journey with them; a valued relationship
  - The person might not be willing or able to hear what you have to offer, which could perpetuate the microaggression and leave you feeling more isolated
  - You can't offer education to every person who might benefit; that can lead to burnout
- Determine what the meta-communication is; then, potential tactics. . .
  - Help the micro-aggressor differentiate between good intent and harmful impact
  - Contradict the group-based stereotype by appealing to the offender's values and principles
  - Promote empathy

\*source: AAUW, ["The Microintervention Anti-bias Workshop"](#)



## Micro-intervention Goal: Seek External Support\*

### Tactics

- Alert leadership
- Report incident
- Seek therapy, counseling
- Seek spirituality, religion, community support
- Establish a buddy system
- Establish or join a support group

### For People of Color

- Focus on your strengths, embrace your beauty
- Celebrate your identity; events, accounts, etc.
- Don't fall for the stereotype
- Self-validate
- Seek professional mental healthcare
- Join support groups, join events in supportive environments that uplift your voice and celebrate your identity
- Communicate your stance through fashion, art, writing

\*source: AAUW, ["The Microintervention Anti-bias Workshop"](#)



## Closing Thoughts

