

**My
Mentored
Learning**
2023

Uncovering Hidden Bias

Peeling back layers to shed light on implicit bias

Challenging Unconscious Bias as a Means to Uproot Inequality in the Workplace

In a world where unconscious bias is often disguised as innocent preference, it can be difficult to identify and address.



Take the free test at:

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

Project Implicit, developed by Harvard University, is an invaluable resource offering a free online test that assesses attitudes and stereotypes, irrespective of our background or demographic.

The primary purpose of these assessments is to unveil our hidden biases, helping us become more conscious of our unconscious thoughts.

The underlying principle is that people tend to pair highly correlated concepts more swiftly compared to opposing concepts. Importantly, the IAT test exhibits resilience to social desirability, and its reliability and validity have been rigorously scrutinized and confirmed.

By measuring the strength of associations between pairs of concepts, the IAT presents individuals with a sorting task, where they categorize images or words displayed on a computer screen. The underlying principle is that people tend to pair highly correlated concepts more swiftly compared to opposing concepts. Importantly, the IAT test exhibits resilience to social desirability, and its reliability and validity have been rigorously scrutinized and confirmed.

I AM Exercise

The activity on the next page is an exercise known as the "I Am" or "Who I Am" exercise, often used to promote diversity and inclusion. Although you might have encountered it before, I strongly recommend that you approach it with renewed focus and attentiveness, as repeating it can yield significant benefits.

The purpose of this exercise is to engage in self-reflection, enabling us to gain a deeper understanding of our authentic selves. By delving into our thoughts, beliefs, and personal history, we unravel the influences that shape our identities.

The origins of this exercise can be traced back to 1993 and are rooted in a poem called "Where I'm From" written by George Ella Lyon. The exercise involves composing 10-15 "I am" statements, which require introspection and contemplation of formative experiences that have molded our present selves.

It is important to explore aspects such as our childhood, teenage years, life challenges, familial traditions, local environment, recurring phrases, significant individuals, and influential authors or experiences. Life encounters contribute to our unique wiring, influencing our thoughts and behaviors.

After dedicating ample time to self-reflection, utilize these memories to construct a response for each "I am" statement. For instance, examples may include "I am a product of private schools," "I am an adopted child," or "I am from an abusive upbringing." Alternatively, you might express being a minority in a predominantly white community or a cancer survivor. These examples illustrate the introspective depth that this exercise can elicit.

I AM Exercise

Reflect - Create - Contemplate

Where I'm From

I am from clothespins,
from Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.
I am from the dirt under the back porch.
(Black, glistening,
it tasted like beets.)
I am from the forsythia bush
the Dutch elm
whose long-gone limbs I remember
as if they were my own.
I'm from fudge and eyeglasses,
from Imogene and Alafair.
I'm from the know-it-alls
and the pass-it-ons,
from Perk up! and Pipe down!
I'm from He restoreth my soul
with a cottonball lamb
and ten verses I can say myself.
--George Ella Lyon

Reflect on:

- Your childhood and teen years
- Familiar sights, sounds and smells
- Childhood tragedies, trials and experiences
- Childhood responsibilities and discipline
- Familiar people
- Familiar sayings
- Personalities and interactions with family and friends closest to you
- Adult challenges and life experiences

Create 15 – 20 'I AM' Statements: (examples in red)

- I am: I am from private schools
- I am: I am a minority from a all white community
- I am: I am from abusive parents
- I am: I am from a childhood of foster parents and know what it feels like to not belong
- I am: I am from a childhood blessed with health and wealth and limited exposure to people different than I was
- I am: I am a cancer survivor
- I am:
- I am:
- I am:
- I am:
- I am:
- I am:
- I am:
- I am:
- I am:

Contemplate which life experiences may have played a part in instilling biases, assumptions, prejudices or stereotypes within you and why.

- Harvard Business Review: Title: Breaking the Bias Habit Authors: Joan C. Williams and Rachel Dempsey Publication Date: July-August 2016 Publisher: Harvard Business Review Press
- Stanford University's Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity: Title: Unconscious Bias Resources Authors: Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity, Stanford University Publication Date: N/A Publisher: Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity, Stanford University
- Stanford University's Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity - Unconscious Bias Resources: <https://ccsre.stanford.edu/resources/unconscious-bias-resources>
- Project Implicit: Project Implicit is a research collaboration between scientists at Harvard University, the University of Virginia, and the University of Washington. Their goal is to educate the public about unconscious bias through research and online tools that allow individuals to assess their own biases.

**Additional Resources for continued
learning about implicit bias**