

Allyship Workshop

with Bilal Harry Khan



OBJECTIVES:



Have conversations about inequity and allyship in a safe & open space that prioritises inclusion.



Understand how to be comfortable with the uncomfortable.



Build our collective ability to speak about inequity and create both individual and group actions that promote change.

LEARNING CULTURE

Notice
Discomfort

Challenge
Status-Quo

Present &
Participate

Open &
Honest



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A member of your team shares with you that they feel their ideas are constantly spoken over and dismissed in meetings. They feel that this is because they are a Black Woman.

You receive feedback that it was great to see so many rainbow flags during Pride Month but there has also been an increase in the use of homophobic language around the office.

You overhear a colleague saying ‘we just cannot justify the extra cost of Live Closed Captioning for this event, there just simply aren’t enough disabled people to justify this’

What feelings came up for you?



PRIVILEGE

Unearned advantage which is gained as a consequence of the lack of disadvantage given from aspects of identity outside of our control.

WHAT IT GIVES:

- The 'power' of being 'normal'
- The 'power' of the benefit of the doubt: safety, freedom, validity
- Voice: opportunity



HOW IT FUNCTIONS

- Accumulative in nature
- Both interpersonally and systemically
- 'To those with privilege, equality feels like oppression' – invisible

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MICROAGGRESSIONS



A statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of **indirect, subtle, or unintentional** discrimination against members of a marginalised group such as a racial or ethnic minority.

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INTENTION

We may have intentions of:

- ◆ Building rapport
- ◆ Not causing harm
- ◆ Getting on with our jobs
- ◆ Etc.



IMPACT

We can still create negative impacts:

- ◆ Someone takes offence
- ◆ Someone feels burdened
- ◆ Harm is caused by inaction

RECOGNISING HOW WE SHOW UP...

FRAGILITY 101

Feelings:

- ◆ Singled Out
- ◆ Attacked
- ◆ Guilty
- ◆ Accused
- ◆ Insulted
- ◆ Scared

Behaviours:

- ◆ Leaving
- ◆ Arguing
- ◆ Denying
- ◆ Focusing on intention
- ◆ Dismissing
- ◆ Justifying

Claims:

- ◆ 'I know Black people'
- ◆ 'I already know all this'
- ◆ 'But I faced classism'
- ◆ 'That is just your opinion'
- ◆ 'You hurt MY feelings'
- ◆ 'You're being racist/sexist/ableist etc to me'

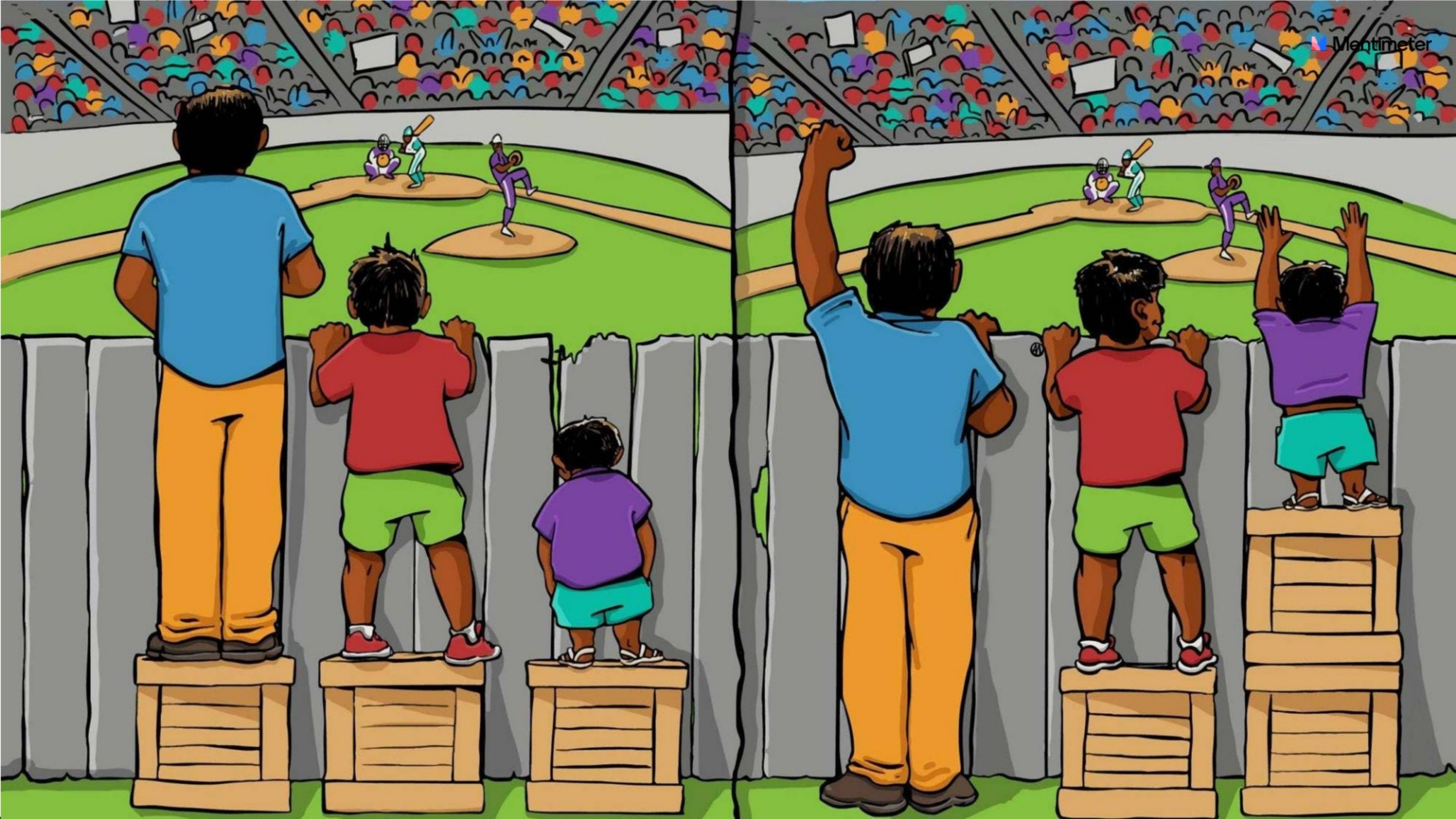
ALLYSHIP:

A verb, not a noun. Take on the struggle as your own. Stand up, even when you feel scared. Transfer the benefits of your privilege to those who lack it. Acknowledge that while you, too, feel pain, the conversation is not about you.

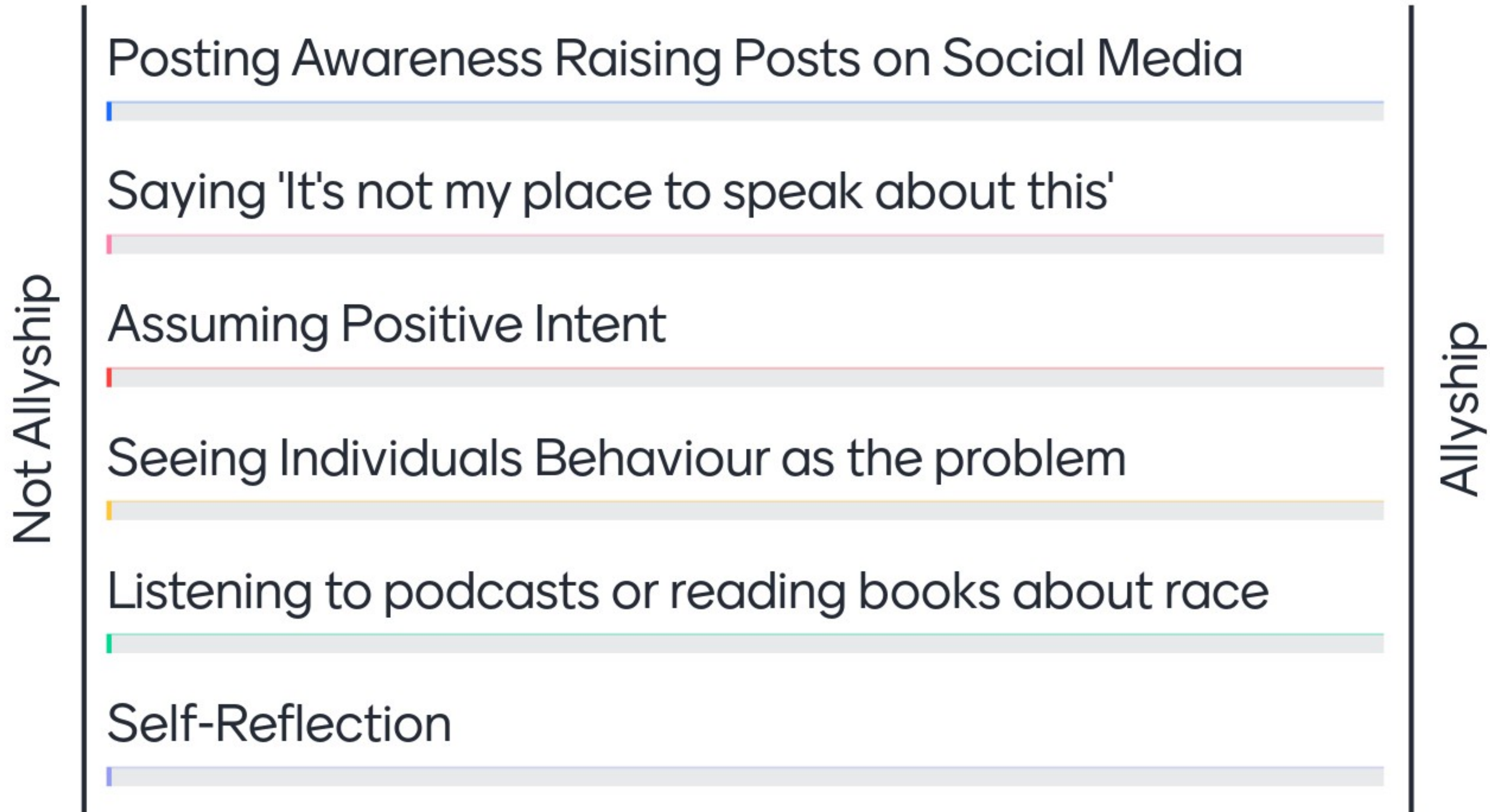
Allyship is a proactive, ongoing, and incredibly difficult practice of unlearning and re-evaluating, in which a person of privilege works in solidarity and partnership with a marginalized group of people to help take down the systems that challenge that group's basic rights, equal access, and ability to thrive in our society.

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Allyship or Not?



1. What would effective and sustainable allyship look like here?
2. What conditions would be required from both us as individuals and the organisation to make this possible?





You are in a meeting with an external client when you notice a Senior member of their team regularly interrupts and speaks over a member of your team, Shazia and directs their comments to the men in the room.

What might prevent people present from being allies?

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WHICH TO USE WHEN...

Calling In

- When there is an opportunity to explore deeper, make meaning together, and find a mutual sense of understanding across difference
- When we are seeking to understand or learn more
- When we want to help imagine different perspectives, possibilities, or outcomes
- Provides for multiple perspectives and encourages paradigm shifts
- Focused on reflection, not reaction

Calling Out

- When we need to let someone know that their words or actions are unacceptable and will not be tolerated
- When we need to interrupt in order to prevent further harm
- Will likely feel hard and uncomfortable, but necessary
- Allows us to hit the “pause” button and break the momentum

EXAMPLES

Calling In

- I'm curious. What was your intention when you said that?
- How might the impact of your words/actions differ from your intent?
- What sort of impact do you think your decision/comment/action might have?
- How might someone else see this differently? Is it possible that someone might misinterpret your words/actions?
- How did you decide, determine, conclude...
- Why do you think that is the case? Why do you believe that to be true?
- Why do you think others have/haven't moved in that direction?

Calling Out

- Wow. Nope. Ouch. I need to stop you right there.
- That word/comment is really triggering and offensive. Be mindful and pick a different word.
- I need to push back against that. I disagree. I don't see it that way.
- I don't find that funny.
Tell me why that's funny to you.
- That's not our culture here. Those aren't our values.
- I need to leave the room if the conversation is going to continue down this road.
- "That word is offensive, please be mindful to pick another word"

TOOLBOX: MANAGING COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

- 1) Minoritised colleagues should not be expected to 'solve' for the inequity
- 2) The impact of silence
- 3) Intentional
- 4) Believe and thank people for lived experiences
- 5) Acknowledge you may not have all the answers
- 6) Courage to call in/out
- 7) Listen to hear
- 8) Avoid filling space with personal experience or generalisations
- 9) Avoid Oppression Olympics
- 10) Be clear on difference between 'debate' and lived experience
- 11) Be aware of space taken up and by whom
- 12) Take the time needed



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IN YOUR TOOLBOX: GROWTH MINDSET

Instead of thinking with a fixed mindset:

"I am not sure what to do/say" / "I am scared of saying the wrong thing"

"I want to do more but I just don't have the time"

"This is not a priority right now with everything else going on"

"What we do won't make enough difference, it's an issue in society"

Try shifting to a growth mindset:

"I will make mistakes and that's okay. I will be grateful for what I learn from them"

"This matters, I will make time"

Working on this will make our work better and more sustainable long term"

"We can make an impact by taking time and working strategically to align our work with the bigger picture"

TOOLBOX: HOW NOT TO TALK ABOUT INEQUITY

Ignoring the issue:

- “I don't see colour”
- “xxxism doesn't happen here”
- “If you work hard enough, nobody cares about your race/gender/sexuality”

Being dismissive about xxxism

- “They're playing the race card”
- “You can't say anything nowadays”
- “It's political correctness gone mad”
- “The woke generation”

Downplaying people's experiences

- “Are you sure it was about xxx – you might be reading too much into it”
- “I have had a hard life and upbringing, I am not privileged”
- “As a woman, I know what you go through...”

Tone policing

- “They're being hostile/difficult/aggressive”
- “You should calm down”
- “If they approached this in a better way, then more people would be on their side”

TOOLBOX: LANGUAGE MATTERS

The reality is that categorising race, ethnicity and identity is important but will always be imperfect.

Do not let the fear of misusing a term or using a word incorrectly act as a barrier to engaging in diversity, equity and inclusion work.

Tips:

- Ask how people prefer to describe their racial, ethnic or national identities
- Be comfortable and confident in knowing language evolves - remain actively conscious of changes and apply a growth mindset to terminology
- Be specific
- Avoid emphasis on negative descriptors
- Avoid acronyms
- Do not generalise
- Inclusive language is about respect, empathy and care – not about political correctness

“

The problem is that individuals from minority backgrounds are not being forthcoming in applying for roles at our organisation.

”

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ACTION PLANS



Pick an area of focus within your work (i.e meetings/hiring/external events etc)



Develop a 'Why' statement for this area that clearly states why this area is important to address



Come up with one sentence on what could be done differently



THANK YOU

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