Inclusive and Compassionate Leadership: creating an anti-racist culture through Organisation Development

Dr Thanda Mhlanga

Contents

In this session we will:

- Reflect on the big "I" in OD, theoretical influences and notion of authentic self.

- Explore the lived experiences of staff from minoritised ethnic backgrounds

- Engage in difficult and uncomfortable conversations about race

- Engage critically with Social Power, Privilege and Allyship

- Reflections (Q&A)

OD/EDI and the Authentic Self
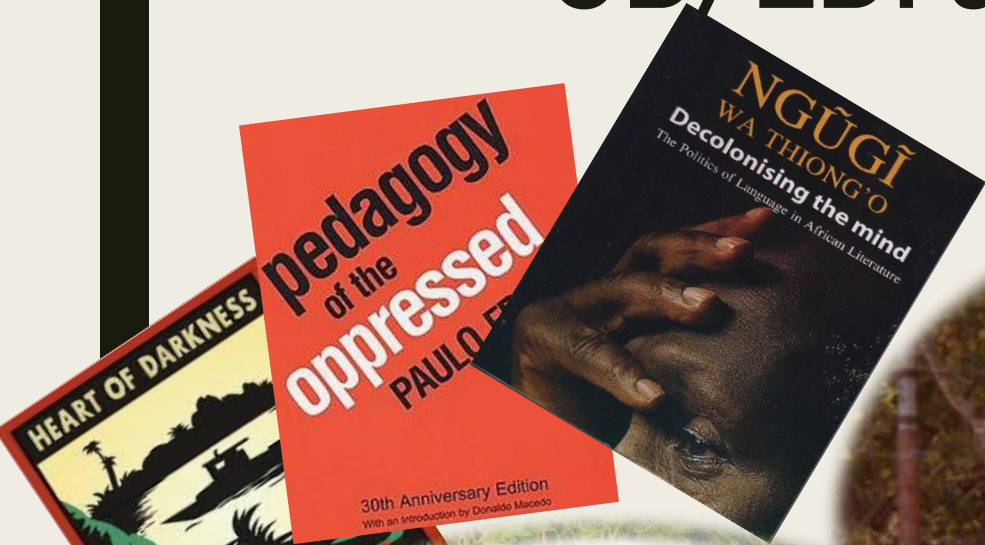
Commitment to:

- Improving individuals
- Improving Teams
- Improving Organisations

Philosophical Underpinning

Qualitative Researcher

Nature of social reality

Ubuntu

Values: social justice, fairness, duty of care, compassion, group solidarity, communality, allyship, respect, dignity, personhood joy, and love.

Critical Ethnography

"Going native"
Going beyond what is to what could be.

Organisation Development

"The Big I Intervention"

Critical Management Studies

"There is a dark side to organisations and leadership."
Inequalities are embedded in systems.

Critical Race Theory

Considers race to be a social construct and racism to be systemic.

Positionality

Unmask and challenge all forms of inequality.

Move marginalised to the centre of their discourse.

IGNITE
INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Potential Emotional Triggers

- Data and personal experiences shared will trigger a range of emotions

- Feel free to go out for a bit of fresh air if uncomfortable or overwhelmed

- Let me know right away or contact me during one of the breaks or after the event

- **Agreement:** All views matter – ODPs are guided by different values and ethics

- We all have baggage (tint on our lenses): "*Where we sit not only influences where we stand but what we see*" (Pettigrew, 1987: 649) – **(Positionality)**

Getting on the same page

- What brings you to this session?

- What are you hoping to gain from this session?

- Are you comfortable talking about race?

- Does your organisation have an inclusive, compassionate and anti-racist culture?

- Does your workforce mirror the communities that you serve?

- Is your Senior Leadership Team representative of your workforce profile?

- How diverse / representative is your Board?

Let's talk Race...

- **Discussion:** Why is race so uncomfortable to talk about? Is there a problem? Do we live in a racist world? Does institutional racism exist? What's going on?
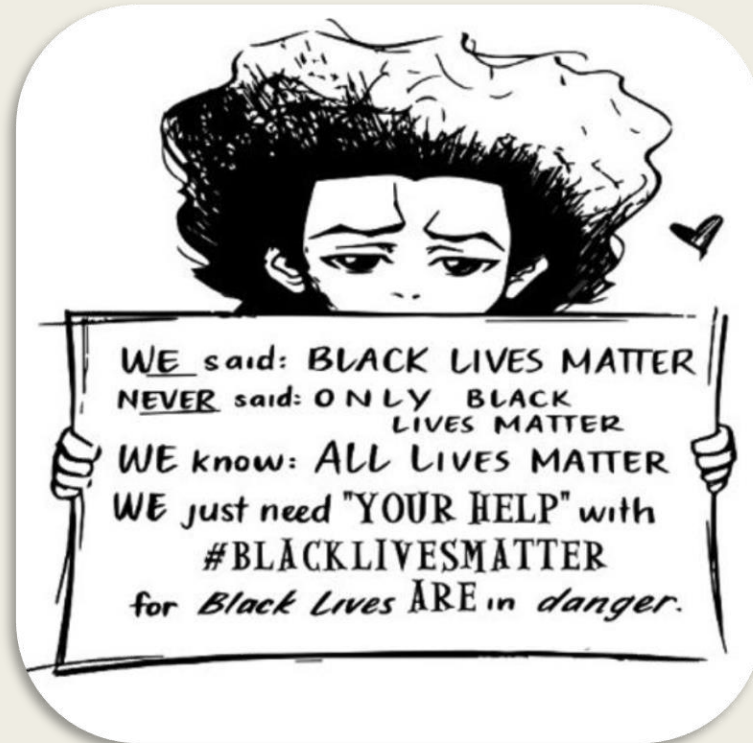
"We don't want to be treated differently or in a special way.
All we are asking for is to be treated fairly."

NHS Staff Survey Results (WRES 2023)

- Global Majority staff at VSM increased by 61.7% since 2018 (201 – 325).

- In <u>76%</u> of Trusts white staff are more likely to be appointed from shortlisting.

- <u>39.3%</u> of staff from minoritised ethnic backgrounds believe there is equal opportunities for career proregression or promotion.

- Global Majority Board Membership is <u>15.6%</u>; Execs are <u>10.8%</u> (workforce = <u>26.4%</u>).

- Largest AfC Band for staff from a Global Majority background is <u>Band 5</u>.

- At <u>46%</u> of Trusts, Global Majority staff are more likely to enter disciplinary process.

- BHA by patients is higher for Global Majority staff in <u>81%</u> of the Trusts.

- BHA from staff is higher for Global Majority staff in <u>94%</u> of the Trusts.

- Perceptions on Equal Opps: Global Majority lower in <u>98.6%</u> of the Trusts.

- Discrimination by staff: Global Majority higher in <u>all Trusts</u>.

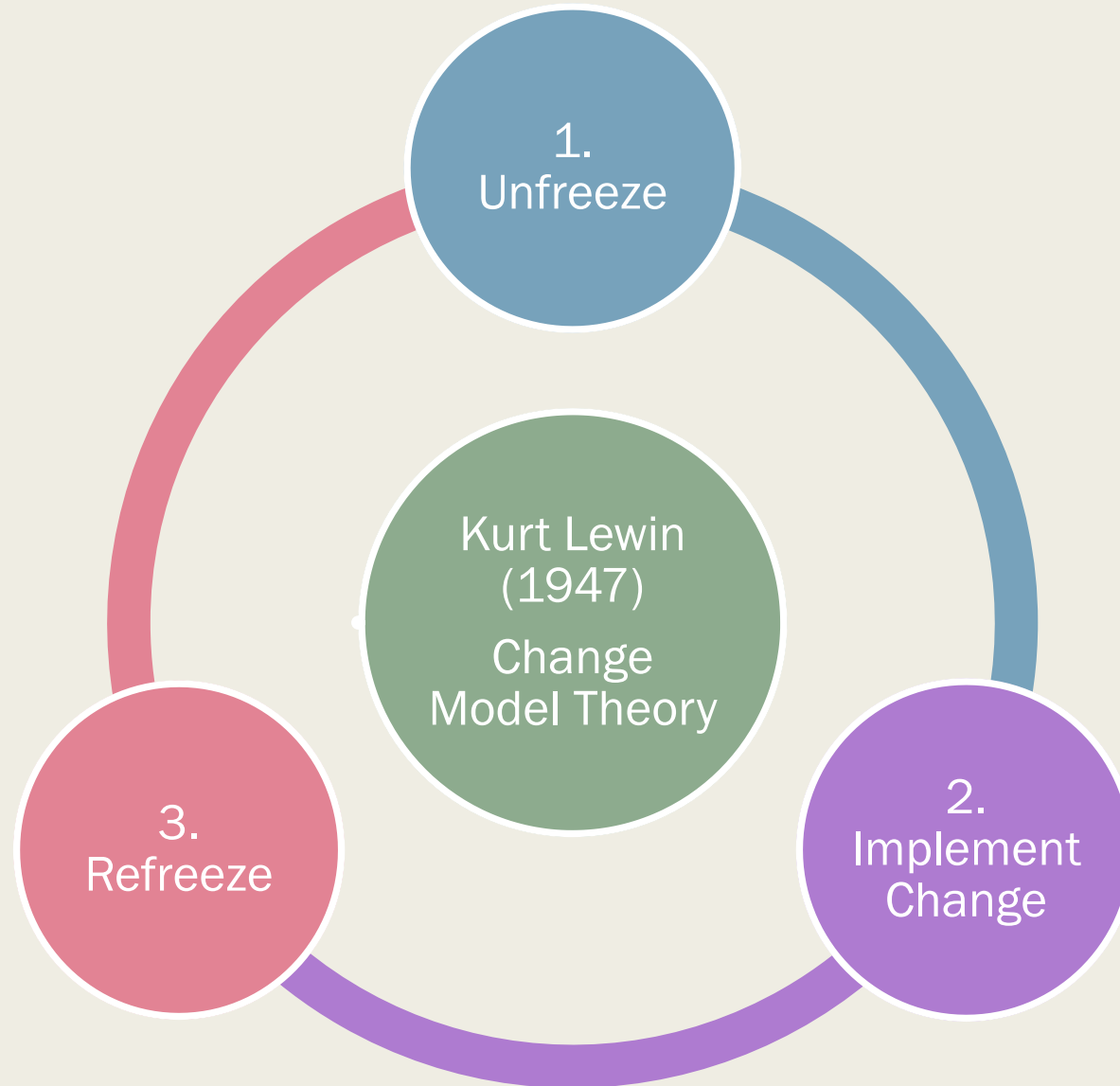# Let's talk Race...
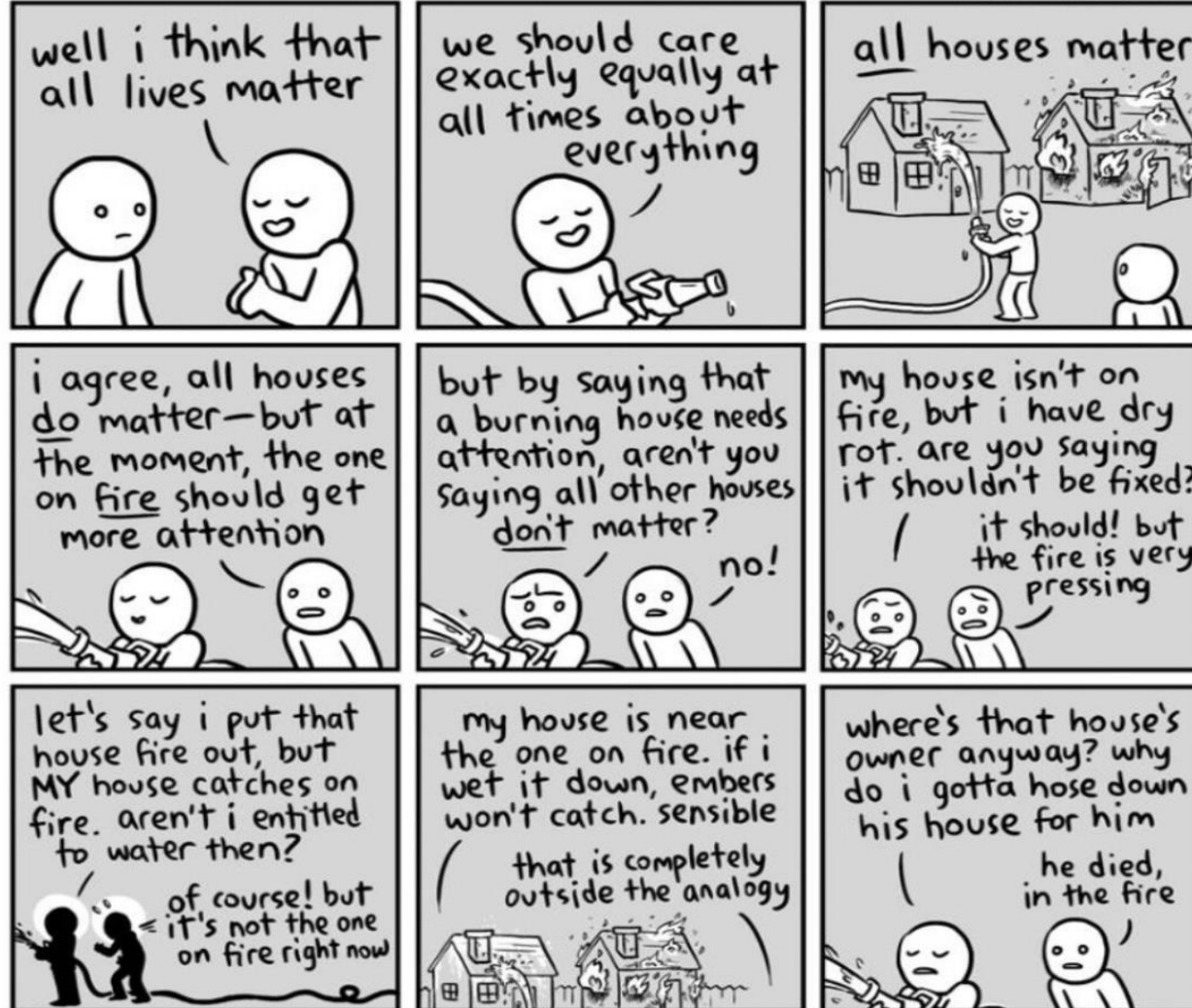
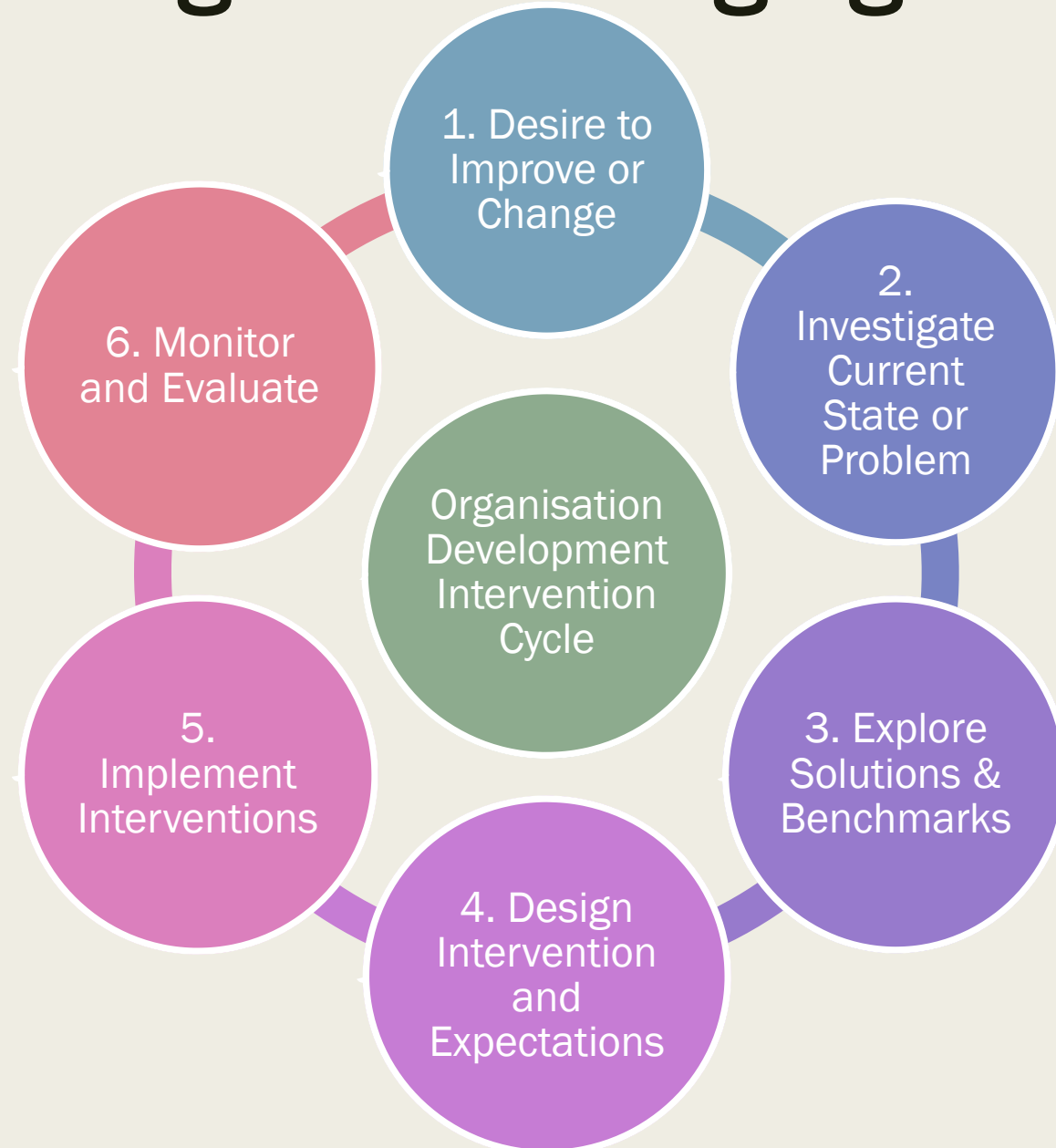# Understanding "The Golden Circle"

The Power of **WHY** (Simon Sinek)

Leading and Managing Change

Leading and Managing Change

The Power of Qualitative Feedback

- Information richness

- Messiness of social reality

- The value of going beyond pre-coded answers

- The ODP values the opportunity to explore in depth

- The ODP accommodates ambiguity associated with dealing with real people in natural settings

- The ODP has tolerance for lack of structure

- The ODP is open to new ideas

The Power of Qualitative Feedback

- In the following slides I present data (verbatim) from surveys I ran.

- Client systems have their own integrity – I take what I am told without judgement.

- However, social reality in organisations is very complex.

- The diagnostic stage is key – what are the real issues?

- There could be a gap between what one is told by the client and the real issues.

- I usually carry out surveys – they allows me to "survey" the landscape.

- Where necessary I'll have focus groups and follow-up 1:1 interviews to dig deeper into issues that emerged via the survey and/or focus groups.

- Triangulation of perspectives is important – brings you closer to the 'truth'.

- Data enables the system to reveal itself to itself.

- Data facilitates 'unfreezing' process

On bullying, harassment and abuse ... (a)

My experiences within the Trust are not fundamentally different from what my ancestors were subjected to which will continue to haunt us beyond today. Everything I am experiencing about racism today is nothing but old wine in a new bottle and we all know that the older the wine, the more intoxicating it gets.

I therefore remain in despair over this issue which has lingered for centuries unabated. You may choose to see my comments as fallacious, negative, pessimistic, myopic, sentimental, subjective or even speculative but none of this is true, I have spoken from a compendium of "MY LIVED EXPERIENCES" which I have chosen to interpret as MY opinion, whether you believe it to be MY reality or not.

(Survey Respondent)

"Why I do not bother reporting (b)"

- It's from my Manager, so pointless as nothing would be done. My manager is protected by very senior people in the Trust.

- How can you talk to your line manager or senior manager about it? You won't have a good and easy working relationship after that.

- The reporting system to call line managers out that have these attitudes is not fit for purpose. If I did, I would need to leave my job and I love working with my patients.

- The people who are in authority are the ones who are responsible, and nobody really cares!

- Repercussions, possibility of it having a negative impact on my career or making things worse.

- Knowing that I won't be listened to, or an excuse will be made for the individual.

- No one would believe me. No one does anything.

- I reported before, received no support or even a response to my email and things got worse.

- This is the norm at (name of Service), nothing gets done about it. So, why bother fighting work culture?

- I have mouths to feed.

"Why I do not bother reporting (c)"

- During my 30yrs in the UK, I have learnt to move past unhelpful experiences as quickly as possible. I have learned to embrace my 'otherness'.

- They have a way of minimising your experiences, so you feel as if you are the problem or overreacting.

- Felt I was expected to be resilient, that my feelings would be dismissed, experiences would be considered minor as people like me feel no pain.

- For fear of being ridiculed, not believed, being told I have chip on my shoulder and being accused of playing the race card. It's exhausting.

- Persons perpetrating it all think and act like that because they know I have no voice and would not be listened to.

- Its about picking one's battles. This is inherent in their approach, so how do you educate someone like that?

- I am regularly called by another person's name because we inhabit a similar skin tone and hair colour. It makes me feel rubbish but would feel petty for reporting it will be minimised as a microaggression.

- A colleague had to seek support from The Samaritans. You can't even challenge unfairness because you will be labelled an "angry aggressive Black woman", but the aggressor is perceived as "assertive".

Typical Feedback

Thanks again for your recent training with our team. Really helpful and it feels as if things are starting slowly to move forward productively (Clinical Lead).

Whilst I wish we hadn't met under quite such complex and emotive circumstances, I wanted to tell you that I have really valued your input and commitment to collaboration and trying to find a way through the storms. I have enjoyed working with you and learnt from you. I have appreciated your integrity, authenticity, professionalism, warmth, and commitment (Head of Service).

I liked the safe space that was created to address the uncomfortable thorny issues in the team. It wasn't easy but everyone was able to share their views and experiences (Clinical Operations Director).

This was an amazing two-day programme. Going into it, I didn't know what to expect. I was nervous as the service was at the brink of implosion. You weren't made to feel guilty but challenged through our own data and research in a supportive and refreshing way to create a safe and more inclusive working environment for BME staff (Deputy CEO and CFO).

Are things different in your organisation?

We have to not just open our eyes to what's going on in other places; we need to open our eyes to what's going on right in front of us.

— Forest Whitaker —

AZ QUOTES

Reflection on learning so far
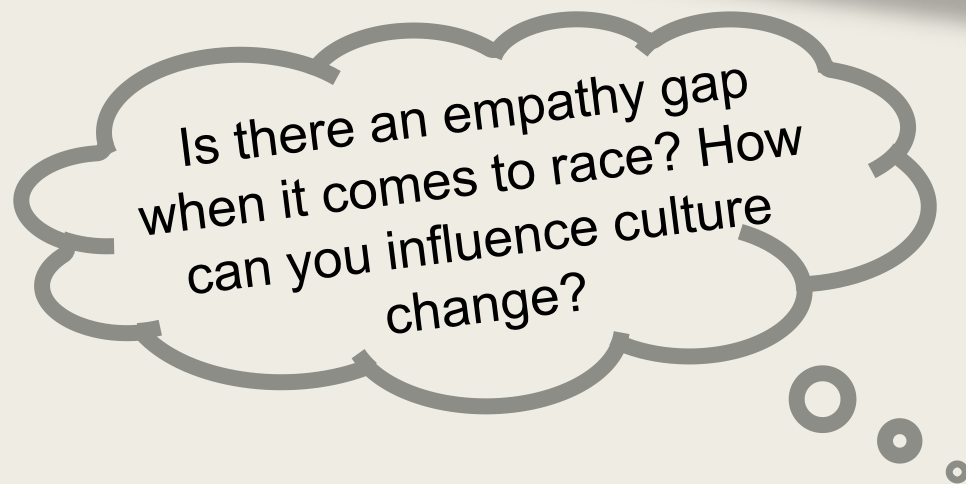
Understanding Power, Privilege and Allyship

"PRIVILEGE ISN'T ABOUT WHAT YOU'VE GONE THROUGH, IT'S ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVEN'T HAD TO GO THROUGH."
-JANAYA KHAN
co-founder of BLM TORONTO

Video link 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4K5fbQ1-zps
Video link 2: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zrvkbqt
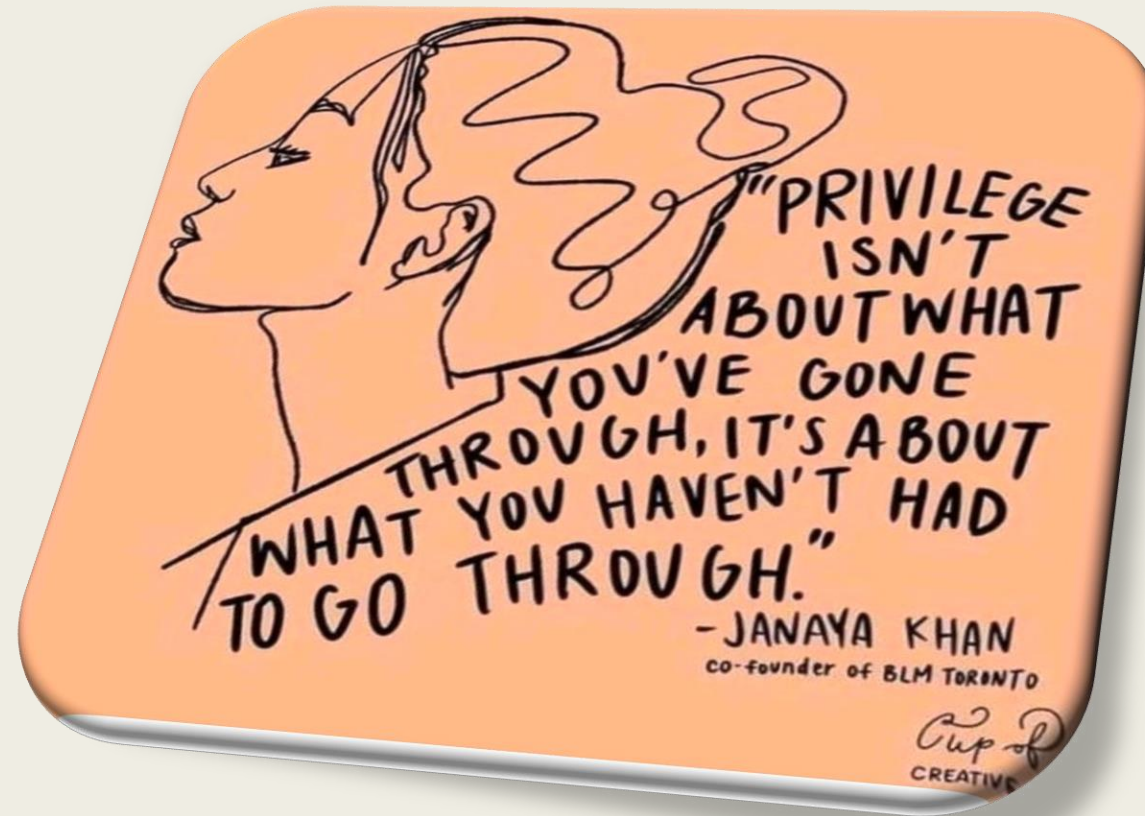
Create a world that works for <u>ALL</u>

If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.

~ Desmond Tutu

Being an Ally

Adapted from Yvonne Coghill's 8 A's of Authentic Allyship

1. Appetite
to immerse yourself in complex and daunting inequalities

2. Ask
questions about social injustice – be curious, read, learn, educate yourself

3. Accept
that there is a real problem. More data is not needed.

4. Acknowledge
openly that the problem needs to be dealt with

5. Apologise
Express sympathy that prejudice is affecting people of certain protected characteristics

6. Appreciate
… and value the benefits diversity and difference can bring. Genuinely work towards equity and fairness.

7. Don't Assume
Develop informed views by seeking to understand individuals

8. Action
Take demonstrable action steps to establish equality and inclusion.

Be accountable

Whilst Yvonne Coghill's model focuses on race, it is applicable to all protected characteristics

Being an Ally means ...

I identify how I may unknowingly benefit from Racism.

I promote & advocate for policies & leaders that are Anti-Racist.

I recognize racism is a present & current problem.

I seek out questions that make me uncomfortable.

I sit with my discomfort.

I deny racism is a problem.

I understand my own privilege in ignoring racism.

I avoid hard questions.

I speak out when I see Racism in action.

Becoming Anti-Racist

Fear Zone   **Learning Zone**   **Growth Zone**

I strive to be comfortable.

I education myself about race & structural racism.

I educate my peers how Racism harms our profession.

I talk to others who look & think like me.

I am vulnerable about my own biases & knowledge gaps.

I don't let mistakes deter me from being better.

I listen to others who think & look differently than me.

I yield positions of power to those otherwise marginalized.

I surround myself with others who think & look differently than me.

Chart adapted by Andrew M. Ibrahim

Embedding Resilient System-wide Change in Teams

Normalising conversations about social power, unearned privilege and discrimination

Providing strong leadership that will honestly confront how inequalities came to existence

Ensuring that diverse voices are represented at decision-making tables

Facilitating Inclusion and Equity for all

Committing to and embedding EDI in the organisation's culture: no 'window dressing'

Developing inclusive environments where injustice is challenged

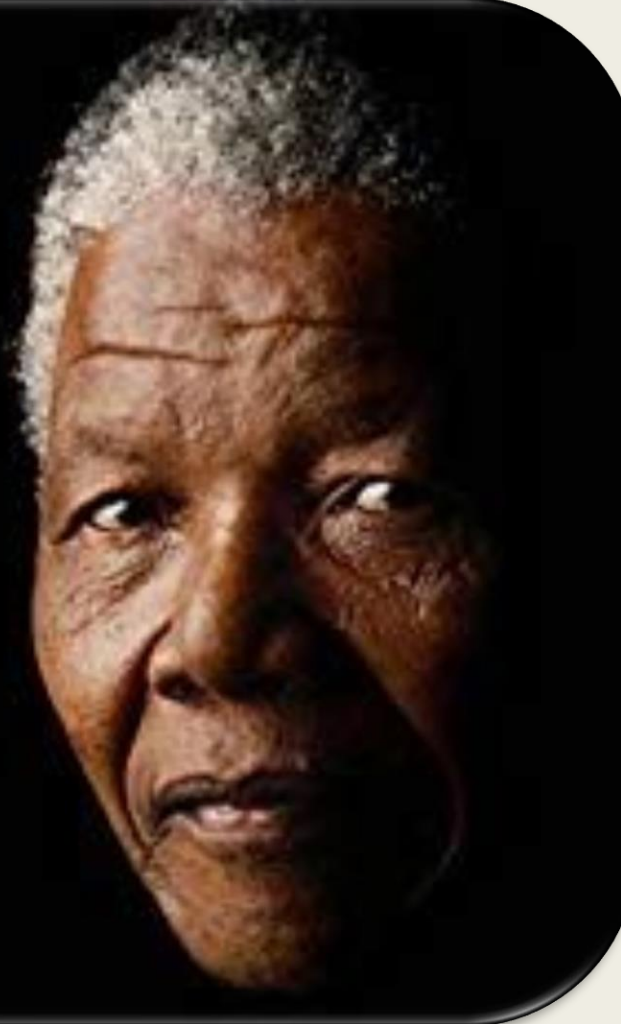Getting the evidence and engaging with the data honestly to facilitate change

Concluding Thoughts

"Education is the Most Powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

Nelson Mandela

Concluding Thoughts

- ODPs have a key role in facilitating anti-racist cultures within teams and across organisations.

- Need to unmask, challenge organisational practices that promote, incubate, reinforce and reproduce injustice.

- Unwillingness to challenge injustice facilitates the production and perpetuation of racism and other forms of injustice.

- Critical engagement: challenge colleagues and push them out of their comfort zones (understanding of one's social position, entitlement and power is key).

- Individual members of a team or organisation have a role to play – we can dismantle or perpetuate injustice.

- Systemic problems require systemic solutions.

- It is hard, but I will talk about racism, I will talk about power and privilege … I am not going to shy away. It's the right thing to do.

Thank you!