Dissolving Implicit Biases for Inclusion

Start by taking a few moments to choose a group that is often excluded in society or who has expressed a need for more inclusion and equity. If you are a member of a marginalized group, see if there is another group you can think of. E.g. people with disabilities, the black or LatinX community etc.

Take a few deep breaths and think back to when you were a child. What was the narrative that you heard about this “group”? Do your best not to judge, simply allow and observe or acknowledge what you heard your caregivers say about this group?

What did you see, hear or read in the media about this group?

How do you think this affected your bias towards this group?

If any uncomfortable emotions arise, take a moment to breathe and feel them fully, don’t resist, instead notice where they are in the body and continue to feel, accept and welcome them. Emotions are simply energies that need to be felt and once felt fully, without going into the story in our minds, they pass and there is then space in which you can create something new.

Imagine the group you’ve been working with. Think about what you would like to put in your relationship with this group now? You can add qualities like: inclusion, respect, compassion.... What does it look like? And most importantly, how does this feel?

If you would like to explore your implicit biases further, Harvard has designed a suite of Harvard Implicit Association Tests (IAT) which are freely available online, including the Disability IAT. Available here: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html