مركز الملك حمد العالمي للتعايش والتسامح
King Hamad Global Center for Coexistence and Tolerance

Leadership for Coexistence Programme
Module 3
Leadership that counters hate, dehumanisation and demonisation

Participant Booklet

Contents

Home Group 1

Welcome to module 3. You will have the opportunity to share your reflections since module 2:

- What goals did you set for yourself at the end of module 2?
- What progress have you made towards those goals?
- What have you learned about yourself?
- What challenges have you faced in applying the content we have discussed so far?
- What would you most like to get from this module?

You may like to record any reflections from your discussion (being mindful of confidentiality).

Team Simulation

How well did your team work together on the tasks set for you?

How did your team respond to the newcomer on your island?

What are the factors that contribute to a shared sense of identity?

What did this activity reveal about co-existence?

The Kingdom of Bahrain Declaration

"Ignorance is the enemy of peace, it is, therefore, our duty to learn, to share, and to live together, by the tenets of faith in the spirit of mutual respect and love."

-His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa-King of the Kingdom of Bahrain

For hundreds of years, different religious groups have lived harmoniously, side by side, in the Kingdom of Bahrain, fully practicing the tenets of their respective faiths in blessed, peaceful coexistence with each other.
We humbly offer the centuries-old traditional Bahraini way of life as an example to inspire others around these principles.

I. Religious Faith and Expression

WE CELEBRATE that religion has been amongst the greatest forces of good in our world, and has principally inspired people to share that same good with their fellow man.
The world community recognizes that religious faith and expression are basic inalienable rights. However, now, as in certain times in the past, religion is too frequently used as a divine sanction to spread hate and dissension.
Rather than sustaining people through crisis, religion has been used to contribute to the crisis, and sometimes it has created those crises. We begin to address this negativity by learning to differentiate between healthy and unhealthy forms of religious teaching and activity. We recognize that this can only be counteracted through inter-faith dialogue and the sharing of knowledge, thus leading to the positivity of enlightenment and understanding.
We declare that when extremist clergy preach hatred, violence and seek to sow the seeds of discord, that they are inciting the desecration of the name of God.

II. Freedom of Choice

WE RECOGNIZE that God instructs us to exercise the divine gift of freedom of choice, and therefore we declare that compelled religion cannot bring a person into a meaningful relationship with God.
Therefore, we unequivocally reject compelled observance.
Furthermore, we declare that every individual has the freedom to practice their religion, providing they do no harm to others, respect the laws of the land, and accept responsibility, spiritually and materially, for their choices.

III. The Determination of God's Will

WE ACKNOWLEDGE that religions may disagree with each other in interpreting God's will, yet all enlightened religions reject invoking His name to legitimize violence against innocent people. This is a clear desecration of His name, rather than a fulfillment of His will.
We, therefore, declare that any act that is found morally repugnant by the vast majority of mankind and is insulting to our collective moral conscience cannot be part of God's revealed will.
We call upon all good people of Faith to disown practices such as the sowing of terror, the encouragement of extremism and radicalization, suicide bombing, promotion of sexual slavery, and the abuse of women and children.

IV. Religious Rights and Responsibilities

WE ACKNOWLEDGE that God expects more of those in positions of spiritual and temporal authority. People of all faiths should be accorded the right to congregate to worship, educate, celebrate, and practice the requirements of their respective faiths.

It is the responsibility of governments to respect and protect equally, both religious minorities and majorities. Neither should be subjected to threats, shame or incitement nor should they be discriminated against as a result of their faith. Those in positions of authority must ensure that individuals who leave their homes for their houses of worship can do so without fear of intimidation, violence, or worse.

Equally, all people of faith and their communities have a special responsibility to demonstrate to their neighbors that extremism is not holier than moderation.

We, therefore, declare that each of us has an active role to play in creating a fully inclusive environment that fosters mutual respect and cooperation.

V. The Hope of Faith

WE PLEDGE to teach our children and demonstrate to them by example that by performing simple acts of kindness and compassion we are acting upon God's command that we invoke His good into the world.

We commit to working for a world where people of sincere belief join together to reject that which divides us and concentrate instead on celebrating and expanding on that which unites us. In this way, we harness the enormous power of collective faith to unite a world in peace, where religion is a blessing to all, and for all, where the blessed spirit of mutual respect and love prevail.

It was from within this region the three Abrahamic Faiths emerged.

Accordingly, their principles have made this region home to countless millions from across all the world's religions.

Therefore, we people who use religion, who teach religion, and who are in positions of influence, declare that we will do all within our power to ensure that religious faith is a blessing to all mankind and the foundation for peace in the world.

"Faith Illuminates our Path to Peace."

-His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa-Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain

July 3rd 2017

Exploring Harm, Hate and Evil

This module is all about leadership which counters hate, dehumanisation and demonisation – the things that undermine peaceful coexistence. In order to effectively counter these things, we first need to understand what they are and what causes them.

Harm – to psychologically or physically hurt another person (whether intentional or not).

Hate – an intense negative emotional response towards people, things or ideas. This usually involves hostility and disgust coming from a place of fear, anger or sense of injury.

In his book[1], Dr Zimbardo defines evil as:
Evil - intentionally behaving in ways that harm, abuse, demean, dehumanise or destroy innocent others - or using one's authority and systemic power to encourage others to do so on your behalf.

The problem with 'evil'

When we think about evil acts or evil leaders we may draw historical examples of structural barriers, racism, discrimination, apartheid and even genocide. We picture the vocal leaders of these movements as being the perpetrators of evil – which may be true. But for these leaders to succeed they also rely on followers or the wider public lending various levels of support.

Zimbardo names some mindsets we may have around the nature of evil:

The essentialist view – good and evil are separate qualities. Evil is perceived as being present in some people but not in others.

The incrementalist view – evil (and good) are something that we are all capable of and therefore we must monitor our experiences, practices and opportunities to commit such acts over time.

The dispositional view – that someone's behaviour (acts of evil) are a direct result of their personal character, traits and choices.

The situational view - that someone's behaviour (acts of evil) can be heavily influenced by the conditions and circumstances in which they find themselves.

Zimbardo worries about the popularity of the essentialist and dispositional views of evil. If we believe that good and evil are clearly separate and that only bad people do evil things, then that can make us vulnerable. Most people believe that they are good. Therefore, we may not be vigilant to situations or pressures for us to cause harm or do evil things.

However, history has shown us that 'normal' and 'good' people **are** capable of contributing to acts of harm and evil – through both their actions and their inactions. The next few pages explore some of the reasons why ordinary or normal people may harm others. This is so that we can take active steps to counter these factors and prevent harm.

[1] Zimbardo, P. (2007). *The Lucifer effect: Understanding how good people turn evil*. Random House.

The Milgram Shock Experiments

Read these statements. Then put a number from 0-100 in the box to show how much you agree.

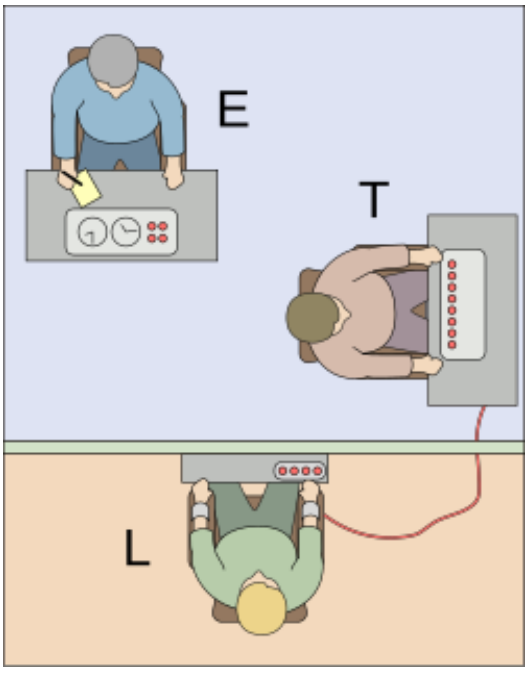
0	25	50	75	100
definitely disagree	mostly disagree	in the middle	mostly agree	definitely agree

Statement	Score
I would give a stranger an electric shock	
I would give a stranger an electric shock if I thought that it was part of important scientific research	
I would give a stranger an electric shock if an expert or important person told me to	

Stanley Milgram took a great interest in the way Nazi officers spoke after the Holocaust. Many of them claimed that they were just 'following orders'. Milgram wanted to know if 'normal' or 'good people' would really contribute to a genocide just because people had been instructed to do terrible things. He created a series of experiments[2,3,4] to test whether participants would be willing to obey an authority figure, even when that figure gave instructions which went against their own conscience and judgement.

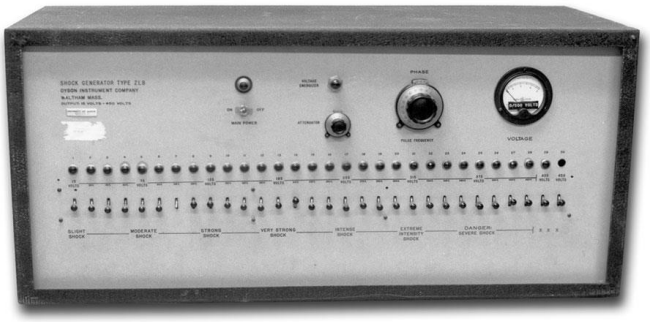
The experiment

- An advert was placed in a newspaper asking for men aged 20-50 years to take part in a study on memory. They were paid $4 to participate for one hour.
- They were greeted by a man in a white lab coat who was the experimenter. (E)
- They met the other participant – who was secretly an actor helping with the experiment.
- Both of them picked their 'roles' for the experiment with a slip of paper. The papers always said teacher. The real participant was always the teacher (T) and the actor pretended that their paper said learner (L).
- The experimenter gave the learner a set of word pairs to memorize. He explained that the experiment tested the effects of punishment on learning.
- After the learner had practiced the pairs, the teacher would read out a key word. The learner would try to remember the associated word. If they got it wrong, the teacher would administer an electric shock. Every time the learner was incorrect the shock level would increase.



[2] Milgram, S. (1963). Behavioral Study of obedience. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 67*(4), 371–378.
[3] Milgram, S. (1965). Some Conditions of Obedience and Disobedience to Authority. *Human Relations*. 18 (1): 57–76.
[4] Milgram, S. (1974). *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View*, London: Tavistock Publications.

- The experimenter showed both the teacher and learner to the learner's room. The learner was strapped into a chair and the electric shocks were tested on them.
- The experimenter also gives the teacher a sample shock of 45 volts so that they have a sense of the shock levels used in the experiment.
- The teacher was then taken to another room where they could speak to the learner via an intercom. The experimenter was sat behind the teacher recording results.
- The shock machine had levers which went up in increments of 15 volts. There were clear labels on the machine:
  - 15 volts - slight shock
  - 75 volts - moderate shock
  - 135 volts - strong shock
  - 195 volts - very strong shock
  - 255 volts - intense shock
  - 315 volts - extremely intense shock
  - 375 volts - danger: severe shock
  - 435 volts - X
  - 450 volts - XX



- The experiment begins. The teacher is asked to read out words for the learner to try and remember the pairs. The learner responds well at first but begins to get some answers incorrect.
- As the learner gets more questions wrong the teacher is expected to increase the voltage of shock they administer.
- All of the learners' responses are actually pre recorded in order to make the experiment fair.
  - At 75 volts, the learner emitted the first audible grunts of pain.
  - By 120 volts, the learner's vocal protests became louder and more insistent.
  - At 150 volts, the learner began to complain specifically about a heart condition.
  - Around 300 volts, the learner pounded on the wall to indicate their distress and they refused to respond to the word pair questions.
  - After 330 volts, the learner became silent, creating the impression that they were either unconscious or unresponsive.
- The experimenter is also following a script. When the teacher expresses any discomfort or protest about shocking the learner, the experimenter says pre agreed phrases like:
  - Please continue
  - Please go on.
  - The experiment requires that you continue.
  - It is absolutely essential that you continue.
  - You have no other choice; you must go on.
  - Please treat no response as an incorrect response
  - If the learner does not respond within 5 seconds, please treat it as an incorrect response
  - Although the shocks may be painful, there is no permanent tissue damage, so please go on.
  - Whether the learner likes it or not, you must go on until he has learned all the word pairs correctly, so please go on

Prediction	%
What percentage of participants do you think delivered shocks of 300 volts? (when the learner pounded on the wall)	
What percentage of participants do you think delivered shocks of 450 volts? – the maximum amount	

Milgram asked a number of people to make predictions about the results of the experiment.

- 14 other Yale psychology professors predicted on average that 1.3% of participants would deliver the maximum shock of 450 volts.
- 40 psychiatrists from a medical school predicted that:
  - When the learner refuses to answer at the 300 volt mark, 3.7% of participants would continue
  - Only 0.1% of participants would deliver the maximum shock of 450 volts.

Watch the video clip[5] recreating Milgram's experiment. Why might ordinary or good people harm others?

[5] Caron, B. (Director). (2006). *Derren Brown: The specials. The Heist, The System*. [DVD for TV]. Channel 4 Productions

Results

All of the participants displayed signs of being uncomfortable at delivering shocks. This included sweating, trembling, stuttering, biting their lips, groaning, and digging their fingernails into their skin, and some were even having nervous laughing fits. Every participant paused the experiment at least once to question it or the experimenter. However, most continued after being 'assured' by the experimenter's comments.

- 65% of participants administered the maximum shock of 450 volts.
- 100% of the participants continued at least to 300 volts.
- The main study contained 40 participants. 35% did not give the maximum shock. These 14 "defiant" participants stopped at the following points:
    - 5 at 300v
    - 4 at 315v
    - 2 at 330v
    - 1 at 345v
    - 1 at 360v
    - 1 at 375v

It is interesting to note that even though some participants refused to deliver the full levels of shock to the other person, they never insisted that the experiment be stopped or made an effort to check on the learner's wellbeing.

After the experiment all participants were told the true nature of the experiment and had the opportunity to meet the actor playing the learner to be reassured they were ok.

Variations

Milgram and other psychologists carried out a number of different versions of the experiment to see if small changes in the conditions changed levels of obedience (The % of people giving the maximum shock of 450 volts).

Variation	Changed factor	% Obedience
Participants worked in pairs (with another actor). The real participant decided whether to administer a shock and then instructed their partner to give the shock.	Direct responsibility (agentic state)	92.5%
Milgram's original experiment		**65%**
Conducting the experiment in an unregistered office building (instead of Yale University)	Location and authority	47%
Participants were in the same room as the learner and had to hold their hand down on the 'shock pad'	Proximity to learner	30%
The experimenter gave instructions to the teacher over the phone rather than sitting behind them	Proximity to experimenter	21%
The experimenter in the lab coat was 'called away' because of a phone call. Another person in plain clothes took over.	Lack of legitimate authority	20%
Participants worked in teams of three (other actors) and alternated who administered the shocks. Other actors refused to administer shocks.	Social norms and support	10%

Why might ordinary or good people harm others? – Lessons from Milgram's Shock Experiment

Social psychologists have named some of the factors that may have contributed to participants administering shocks even though they were visibly uncomfortable doing so.

Obedience to authority – a tendency to follow the orders of or try to please people in positions of perceived legitimate power. The experimenter wore a lab coat and was stationed at Yale University which may have made them seem credible and as having expertise.

Obedience to authority has also been tested in other experiments and case studies, indicating that it is a powerful phenomenon.

In an experiment[6], 22 nurses received a phone call from a staff doctor who they had never met, and he told her to administer a medication to a patient immediately so that it would take effect. He said that he would sign the drug order when he arrived at the hospital. Then he ordered her to give his patient 20 milligrams of the drug Astrogen. The label on the container of Astrogen indicated that five millilitres was usual, and that 10 millilitres was the maximum dose. His instruction doubled the dosage. 21 out of 22 nurses complied. They started to pour out the medication (which was actually a placebo) before the researcher stopped them.

A researcher read the transcripts from 37 serious plane crashes or accidents. This revealed that in 81% of those accidents, the co-pilot failed to challenge the pilots incorrect or misjudged orders.[7]

Agentic state / diffused responsibility – carrying out the orders of another (usually an authority) and not feeling personally responsible for their actions. The experimenter reassured the participant that the experiment must continue and that there would be no lasting damage. This may have allowed participants to transfer their responsibility onto the experimenter.

Belief perseverance - maintaining a belief despite new information that contradicts it. The participant may have originally believed the experimenter had good intentions. As the shock levels increased and the learner complained of a heart condition, participants may have doubted those good intentions but ignored this new information. People like to hold on to their original beliefs.

For the greater good / moral justification – carrying out a 'bad' action because you believe it serves an important cause. The experimenter used the phrases 'the experiment requires that you continue'. Participants may have believed that their participation was supporting important scientific research.

Unclear exit – not knowing how to end a social situation which makes you uncomfortable. Participants were not given clear instructions about how to end the situation and when they did express concerns the experimenter told them to continue. They may have been unsure how to stop or if they had a choice to stop. They may have also believed that the quickest way to make their discomfort end is to finish the experiment quickly.

[6] Hoffling, C. K., Brotzman, E., Dalrymple, S. Graves, N. and Pierce, C. M., (1966). An experimental study in nurse-physician relationships. *Journal of nervous and mental disease, 143,* 171-180.

[7] Tarnow, E. "Self-Destructive Obedience in the Airplane Cockpit and the Concept of Obedience Optimization." In Blass, T. (1999). *Obedience to authority; current perspective on the Milgram paradigm.* Psychology press.

Incremental transgressions – when 'bad' acts are committed gradually people are more likely to commit them compared to being asked to do something very harmful straight away. Participants began with 15 volt shocks and gradually increased shock levels.

Contractual obligation – a verbal or written agreement that someone will do something. This may not give the full details of what is expected. Participants agreed to be paid $4 to participate in the experiment and therefore could feel they have to continue.

Meaningful role – giving someone a role to play or a purpose to follow can help to motivate them, especially if that role is positively perceived. Participants were told they were teachers and therefore may have believed they were contributing to educational knowledge.

Reframe the situation – use language that changes the focus away from the negatives and towards possible positives. Participants were encouraged to shift their focus from the learner's pain to the importance of the experiment (a possible good).

The harm of inaction – when you do nothing to prevent harm coming to others, even though you are not the one directly causing it. Some people refused to shock the learner as they did not want to directly cause harm. But they did nothing to challenge the whole experiment or demand it be stopped even though they knew that more people would be electrocuted. Bad situations can persist if people get to feel good about their personal protest, but ultimately allow the system to continue.

The Milgram experiments and Genocide

Milgram said that his initial motivations for his experiments were to explore some of the psychological mechanisms at play in the Holocaust. He wanted to establish some of the factors that could lead relatively ordinary people to support genocide.
James Waller is the chair of Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Keene State College. In his book[8] he recognises that Milgram's work reveals important aspects of human behaviour such as obedience to authority. However, he says that it does not fully explain genocides and mass killings as the conditions were different in four major ways:

1. Milgram's participants were assured that the 'learner' would not be harmed in the long term. Perpetrators of genocide know that their choices and actions result in death.
2. Milgram's participants had no previous relationship with the 'learner' and so no reason to want to harm them. Perpetrators of genocide often have a history of ideological or political reasons for wanting to harm their victims.
3. Milgram's participants displayed discomfort or anguish at what they were being asked to do. Perpetrators of genocide have been known to show initial discomfort at their actions but then to lean into their role – some even enjoying it through sadism or a belief in their purpose.
4. Milgram's experiment lasted one hour which gave participants little time to reflect on their choices. Perpetrators of genocide often commit their acts over weeks, months or years which gives ample time for them to reflect on their choices and their consequences.

This means that Milgram's results alone are not a good explanation of why people commit extreme acts of hate – however it may be useful for understanding some of the small ways in which bad acts can be encouraged.

[8] Waller, J. (2007). *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing*. Oxford University Press.

Notes on Milgram

Ethics
Milgram's experiment, along with many other experiments at the time, raised lots of questions about ethics in psychological research. Critics argued that participants experienced psychological harm from participating in the research and being led to believe they hurt others. Milgram argued that many participants commented afterwards that they were glad to have taken part and learn about their responses to this situation.
This experiment triggered greater scrutiny of the procedures for future experiments.

Scientific rigour
Later critics of Milgram's work have said that the exact records of what happened and the results display discrepancies. This has led to some questions about the accuracy of Milgram's results. Despite these concerns his research is still widely used to explore obedience to authority.

Zimbardo's Stanford Prison Experiment

Philip Zimbardo was a friend and colleague of Stanley Milgram. He also took an interest in why 'good people' might do bad things. He took a keen interest in the United States prison system (as well as overseas prisons) and noticed that terrible atrocities were committed against inmates. Zimbardo wondered if this was because the type of people who become prison guards were 'bad apples' (bad people) or whether good people could be influenced by the situation they are in. What happens when you put good apples in a bad barrel.

He conducted the Stanford Prison Experiment (SPE)[9,10] in 1971 and it is still one of the most famous and also problematic psychology studies of all time. (The issues with the study will be outlined later).

The Experiment

- An advert was placed in a newspaper asking for male college students to take part in a research study of prison life. They would be paid $15 per day to take part for 1-2 weeks.
- Applicants were screened in order to remove anyone who displayed psychological problems, medical disabilities or a history of drug abuse or criminal activity.
- 24 students were finalised and they were either assigned to be 'guards' or 'prisoners' based on a coin flip. There were no significant personality, educational or financial differences between members of the groups.
- The prisoners were picked up from their homes in a fake arrest (with a police car) and told they had violated a penal code. They were searched, handcuffed, given their rights and then blindfolded. They were driven to a fake prison set up in the basement of Stanford University.
- The corridor of the university had been changed to have a prison feel. Office doors were replaced with doors that had bars and cell numbers on. Three cot beds were put into each room to make a shared cell. The corridor was 'the yard' – where prisoners would be allowed to walk, eat and exercise.
- Prisoners would need to be escorted down the corridor to the toilet. They were made to wear blindfolds so as not to see the other university settings on the way.
- There were no windows or clocks to allow people to judge the passage of time
- At the end of the corridor was a small cupboard which was used as the 'hole' for solitary confinement of bad prisoners.
- There were some hidden cameras and audio recording equipment around the prison.
- Guards were given uniforms to wear – a khaki coloured shirt and trousers, a police club / baton, reflective sunglasses and a whistle around their neck.
- When prisoners arrived, they were searched, stripped naked, sprayed with de-lousing spray and given their uniform. This was a smock a loose fitting all-in-one garment to wear, no underwear, rubber sandals, a cap to cover their hair (instead of shaving it) and a heavy chain around their ankle. Their clothing also had an identification number.

[9] Haney, C., Banks, C., & Zimbardo, P.G. (1973). Interpersonal dynamics in a simulated prison. *International Journal of Criminology and Penology, 1*, 69-97. (no longer in publication)

[10] Zimbardo, P. G., Haney, C., Banks, W. C., & Jaffe, D. (1973, April 8). The mind is a formidable jailer: A Pirandellian prison. *The New York Times Magazine*, Section 6, 36.

- 9 prisoners and 9 guards were put into the experiment with the remaining participants on stand by in case there were drop outs.
- Three guards worked a shift together for 8 hours and then rotated.
- All 9 prisoners were in the experiment for 24 hours a day. Three prisoners shared a cell together.
- Guards were not given any formal training on their role, though they were instructed to act like prison guards and that their task was a serious one.
- Philip Zimbardo played the prison superintendent in the experiment. Other members of his research team played wardens.
- Participants were expected to be in the simulation for 1-2 weeks to explore the effect that the prison environment had on behaviour.
- Experimenters captured 12 hours of video recordings, 30 hours of audio, interviews, diaries and questionnaires from participants[11]

All participants were ordinary, good college students who agreed to take part in a research study.

Predictions – what kind of behaviours might you expect to see from the prison guards?
Predictions – what kind of behaviours might you expect to see from the prisoners?

[11] Images retrieved from https://www.prisonexp.org/ on 23/04/25

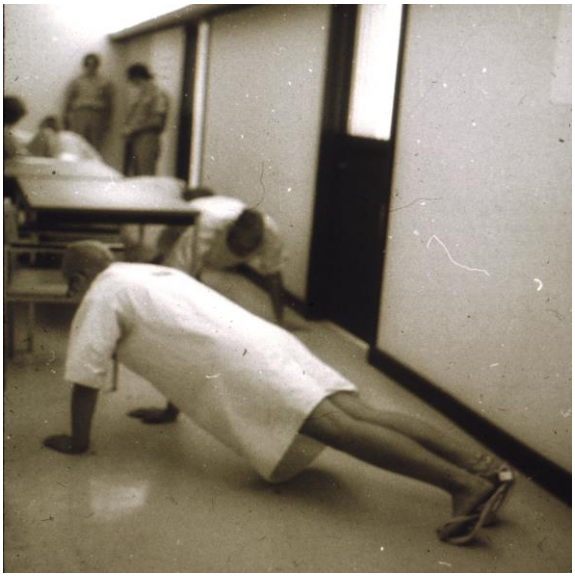
Watch the video clip[12] about the Stanford Prison Experiment. Why might ordinary or good people harm others?

[12] BuzzFeed Unsolved Network, (2022). The Abusive and Shocking Stanford Prison Experiment (James Troup examines the infamous Stanford Prison Experiment.) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hUjyzP08uQ Retrieved 03/05/25

Results

This was not a formal experiment with numerical results to draw upon. Instead, the results were qualitative observations of participants behaviour changes over time, depending on the role they were playing.

- The first day of the experiment went by without much event.
- Guards generated their own list of rules to enforce on prisoners and maintain order – some of which were quite arbitrary.
- Prisoners started by not taking the process seriously and laughing / smirking at guards.
- On the morning of the second day, prisoners removed their stocking caps, ripped off their numbers, and barricaded themselves inside the cells by putting their beds against the door.
- The next shift of guards believed other guards had been too lenient and that they needed to enforce order.
- Guards used fire extinguishes to force prisoners away from barricaded doors and placed some prisoners in solitary confinement.
- Guards also stripped prisoners naked and removed beds from cells as punishment.
- Guards told the prisoners that 'good' prisoners would be able to sleep in the privilege cell with beds, uniforms and special food.
- Later on, these good prisoners were distributed across the three cells to create confusion and break allegiances between prisoners.
- Over time guards gave more commands of prisoners (push ups, singing songs, doing role calls).
- Guards' rules became more arbitrary such as the denial of toilet 'privileges' (use of a bucket in cells instead), restriction of smoking and silence in common areas.
- Over time guards become more insulting and deindividuated the prisoners.
- The practice of push ups became more frequent and guards would sometimes step on prisoners backs or make other prisoners do so to make it more difficult.



- 36 hours into the experiment one prisoner (#8612) began suffering from acute emotional disturbance, disorganized thinking, uncontrollable crying, and rage. Researchers were initially reluctant to realise him in case he was 'play acting' and told him he could be an informant on other prisoners in order to lessen the guards' hostility to him.
- Prisoner #8612 informed the other prisoners "You can't leave. You can't quit." His emotional state continued to decline and he was released.
- Parents and friends were invited for a fake visit. They ended up playing along with the simulation too, asking their prisoner if they had been well behaved. Some quietly questioned Zimbardo about how fatigued and distressed their child seemed. Zimbardo had fully assimilated the role of superintendent and blamed the prisoner(s); "What's the matter with your boy? Doesn't he sleep well?" "Don't you think your boy can handle this?"
- A rumour began that prisoner #8612 was arranging a break out of the other prisoners. Zimbardo and his team explored ways to prevent this breakout such as moving the prisoners to a real jail, moving floor or bringing #8612 back into the experiment, saying he had been released on false pretences. None of these actions were actually carried out.
- Zimbardo later admitted that he became a prison superintendent instead of a researcher.

- Guards increased jumping jacks, sleep deprivation and menial tasks like cleaning toilets.
- Prisoners were invited to meet with a prison chaplain – a real priest – to discuss their situation. They all introduced themselves by number rather than name. The priest role-played well and asked the prisoners what they were doing to work towards getting out of prison (contacting lawyers etc) which panicked the prisoners.
- Prisoner #819 broke down at one point and the guards responded by getting other prisoners to chant "Prisoner #819 is a bad prisoner, because of what prisoner #819 did, my cell is a mess." The prisoner heard this and it exacerbated is emotional distress.

- A parole board was formed to discuss the release of prisoners.
- Many prisoners became passive and obedient in order to avoid hostility from the guards.
- Prisoner #416 was a late addition to the experiment to replace #819. He was shocked by the conditions and went on a hunger strike in order to try and get released.
- The guards put #416 in solitary confinement for longer than their rules allowed as a form of punishment.
- The guards also asked other prisoners if they would forfeit their blankets to release #416. They chose to leave him in confinement and protect their own interests.
- Zimbardo's girlfriend and fellow researcher Christina Maslach came to observe the experiment and was shocked by the inhumane conditions. She strongly suggested the experiment be shut down as it was harming the participants.
- Experimenters noticed that the guard's behaviour was more abusive when they thought they were not being watched. Tape recordings at night time when the guards thought the experiment was 'off' revealed they had been getting the prisoners to role play increasingly demeaning acts – guards instructed them to role play being female and male camels and to stand near each other rocking as if mimicking intercourse.
- Over the study four prisoners broke down emotionally in order to try and escape the situation.
- One prisoner developed a psychosomatic rash over his body.

There is still some dispute about which of these factors were actually at play as Zimbardo's research may not have been as truthful as originally portrayed. However, the majority of social psychologists identify these factors in why prisoners and guards harmed each other (some similar to Milgram's experiment).

Dehumanisation – when a person or group is deprived of their positive human qualities and made to seem less than human. This can be done through language (comparing to animals, verbal abuse), symbols and propaganda or through physical treatment (refusing human interaction, treatment like animals). Normal behaviours can be suspended if you view the other as an object rather than as a person. Dehumanisation is frequently used in prejudice, racism and discrimination. The prisoners were often labelled negatively, denied the dignity of a private toilet and wore chains like cattle.

Deindividuation – when individuals in a group lose their individual sense of identity and responsibility. They become anonymous in the group or crowd. This can increase the chance of people committing harm because they are anonymous or being the recipient of harm because people do not see them as individuals. The guards' uniforms prevented individual eye contact and they all wish to be addressed as Mr Correctional Officer rather than by an identifiable name. The prisoners were all made to look the same and given numbers instead of names to strip away their individual identity.

Deindividuation and anonymity were studied in a Halloween experiment[13]. More than 700 children were studied in a real-life setting. Researchers put out bowls of candy and coins that said 'take one'. Taking more than one was considered a transgression.

Researchers noted whether children arrived alone or in groups. When researchers answered the door, they either asked children to take off their masks (identified them) or explicitly said they couldn't tell who they are (anonymous).

The percentage of transgressions was:

- 57% in an anonymous group
- 21% when anonymous and alone
- 21% in an identifiable group
- 8% when identifiable and alone

This shows how conformity (peer pressure) and deindividuation can work together to increase 'bad' behaviour.

Conformity (to peers) – the tendency to align behaviour, attitudes and beliefs with those of the wider group, usually in order to fit in or gain approval. Once a majority of influential guards started to display certain negative behaviours, others felt the need to join in to be part of the group. Guards who were 'tough' were celebrated and popular which will have increased the pressure to conform.

[13] Diener, E., Fraser, S. C., Beaman, A. L. and Kelem, R. T. (1976). Effects of deindividuation variables on stealing among Halloween trick-or-treaters. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 33*, 178-183

Conformity (to a social role) – an individual adapts the behaviour to match the expectations and norms associated with a particular role that they are occupying. All participants were similar at the start of the experiment. Guards may have believed that they were expected to be tough, punitive and even cruel – a recent film 'Cool Hand Luke' depicted a very tough guard character. Prisoners may have believed that they were expected to be resistant or cause trouble.

In-group – out-group dynamics – the tendency for individuals to categorise themselves and others into groups, leading to preferential treatment and biases towards members of one's own group (in-group) and often negative attitudes towards those in other groups (out-group). Both prisoners and guards found a sense of bonding within their own group and hostility towards the other group.

Lack of accountability – when there are no checks on behaviour or consequences for transgressions people may continue to harm others or increase the severity of harm. There was an early physical interaction between a guard and prisoner which involved pushing. Guards were worried they would be punished for physical contact. Not experiencing consequences may have spurred them to test the limits.

System power – when people are authorised or have institutionalised permission to behave in certain ways or to forbid and punish certain actions of others. The system provides a higher level of authority than the usual rules and norms. The guards may not normally have degraded others but felt it was authorised and even encouraged within this prison system.

Rationalising harm to reduce cognitive dissonance – cognitive dissonance is the psychological discomfort someone feels when they hold conflicting values, beliefs, attitudes or behaviour. People can reduce this discomfort by either changing their behaviours to be in alignment with their beliefs or changing their beliefs to be in line with their behaviour. Over time, guards may have felt uncomfortable about their treatment of prisoners and so taken on the belief that prisoners deserved punishment in order to correct their 'bad' behaviour or maintain order in the prison. This creates a justification for the harm they caused.

Victim blaming – shifting the focus away from the perpetrator of harm by creating a narrative that the victim somehow instigated the harm or was deserving of harm. The guards often said they had to punish prisoners because of their lack of obedience – it was their fault for not following orders (which were unreasonable orders.)

Groupthink – where a group of people makes poor decisions because they favour group harmony and conformity over critical analysis of the situation or options. In groupthink people may not consider many options, only use selective information, withhold criticism, quiet dissent and pressure others to join. The guards' decisions to administer punishments and the prisoners' decisions to create protest were not well thought out – they were about belonging to the group.

Boredom – an emotional state where someone is disinterested in activities or their surroundings, feels they have nothing to do and is not occupied. Some guards commented in their diaries that humiliating the prisoners was a way to prevent boredom.

Unclear exit – not knowing how to end a social situation which makes you uncomfortable. Some guards shared that they did not like the harsh treatment of prisoners but they did not know what to do about this. Without an exit strategy it may have been easier simply to join in and complete their shift so they could leave.

Incremental transgressions – when 'bad' acts are committed gradually people are more likely to commit them compared to being asked to do something very harmful straight away. Guards began with minor acts like push ups and late-night head counts. This gradually escalated into sleep deprivation, acts of humiliation and violence.

When an individual commits a bad act there is a saying used that they are a 'bad apple' – this implies the rest of the barrel of apples is good and the 'bad apple' can spoil others.
Zimbardo was testing the theory that you can have a 'bad barrel' encouraging otherwise 'good apples' to turn bad.

We can use this metaphor to ask 3 questions:

- What makes someone a bad apple? (their personality, attitudes or disposition)
- What kind of barrel are we living in? (how does a situation influence us?)
- Who are the barrel makers and what do they gain? (how has the system been designed)

Think about a real life example of a problematic or harmful act.

- **What factors are the responsibility of the individual? (the bad apple)**
- **How did the situation contribute? (the bad barrel)**
- **How does the wider system encourage or allow the situation? (the barrel maker)**

Criticisms of The Stanford Prison Experiment

Zimbardo's experiment is taught as standard on many psychology courses as a warning that good people can do bad things simply because of the situation they are put in. The main ingredients featured are **power differences, deindividuation dehumanisation, and conformity to a role**. This research has been used in public commentary and even court cases to absolve individuals from doing bad things if the situational factors are perceived to have influenced their free will. However, later critics[14] have explored Zimbardo's methodology and discovered that the experiment may not have been reported accurately and that other factors may have been at play.

> In the original paper, Zimbardo and team say that guards were not given any particular instructions about how to be guards, other than to "do what they saw fit to maintain order" as long as they did not hit the prisoners.
> In actuality, guards were told from the start to "order them around" and that "If we do not do anything, then we're just playing a game, and nothing happens—we do not learn anything. So your inventiveness and whatever else—stick-to-it-ness as far as devising things, working out a schedule, and then rewards and punishments and all of this kind of thing are very important part of making the thing run."[15]

The cruellest guard in the study, nicknamed John Wayne, was Dave Eshelman. He had taken the lead on inventing new forms of punishment for prisoners and escalating levels of harassment. In interviews years later he said that that guards had been told to oppress prisoners and be tough one them, and that the study was about the prisoner's behaviour – not their own. With this in mind he believed he was being helpful and serving a scientific purpose by being cruel.

A transcript of an interview between guard 7 and 'the warden' became available later on. Guard 7 had been reluctant to act repressively in the experiment and warden Jaffe explicitly tried to change the guard's behaviour: "We noticed this morning that you weren't really lending a hand . . . but we really want to get you active and involved because the guards have to know that every Guard is going to be what we call a tough Guard". Rather than letting the participant choose his own behaviour (the purpose of the experiment) he was directly instructed to follow a particular role for the benefit of the experiment.

This means that the following additional factors were at play:

Obedience to authority – a tendency to follow the orders of or try to please people in positions of perceived legitimate power. Guards were following the explicit orders of Zimbardo and the wardens to behave oppressively.

For the greater good / moral justification – carrying out a 'bad' action because you believe it serves an important cause. Guards may have felt they were playing the 'mean' role to support important research OR that mean guards served a good purpose of teaching prisoners a lesson.

---

[14] Haslam, S. A., Reicher, S. D. & Van Bavel J. J. (2019). Rethinking the Nature of Cruelty: The Role of Identity Leadership in the Stanford Prison Experiment, *American Psychologist, 74,* 809–822

[15] Le Texier, T. (2019). Debunking the Stanford Prison Experiment. *American Psychologist, 74,* 823–829.

Agentic state / diffused responsibility – carrying out the orders of another (usually an authority) and not feeling personally responsible for their actions. The guards may have felt that ultimately Zimbardo and his team were responsible for what happened and so they were not personally responsible.

Personality factors – the idea that some people may be included towards particular traits or attitudes. Critics wonder if the type of people who sign up for a 'prison study' are drawn to being authoritarian or cruel.

Zimbardo argues against these criticisms and you can read his comments on his website.[16]

Online documentary maker Vsauce[17] explores the Stanford prison experiment's criticisms and interviews Dave Eschelman. He also devises an updated experiment which seeks to replicate Zimbardo's hypothesis without the confounding factors:

- Participants are asked to solve difficult puzzles together as a team. (In-group)
- They do so in complete darkness (anonymity)
- Each participant is assigned a number rather than a name (deindividuation)
- They are told that another team is doing the same task in another room (dehumanised other)
- Participants have the choice to play a distracting loud noise to the other team. This ranges from 1-12 in intensity where anything under a 7 is safe to hearing (opportunity for cruelty).
- If any participant pushes the button, the intensity of the sound played is based on the highest number in the room (diffused responsibility).

To differentiate it from Zimbardo's experiment:

- Participants were not primed to play a particular role (guard / prisoner) in order to avoid demand characteristics or conformity to a role. Instead, they were simply told they'd be studying their response to completing puzzles.
- Participants were screened using The Big Five personality test. Those scoring highest on honesty and conscientiousness were selected to avoid cruel or authoritarian personalities.
- The experimenters occasionally played a level 3 distracting noise into participants rooms in order to 'provoke' a response from the participants.

Results

Group 1 – over the 2 hours, experimenters played the noise 23 times. The 4 participants played a distracting noise 6 times and their maximum noise level was 5.

Group 2 - over the 2 hours, experimenters played the noise 44 times. The 4 participants played a distracting noise 38 times. This was mostly done by a single participant and always in retaliation to the experimenters playing a noise. Their maximum noise level was 5.

They conclude that even with anonymity, opportunity and diffused responsibility, people are not inherently cruel unless they are told to be.

[16] Philip Zimbardo's response to recent criticism of the Stanford prison experiment. https://www.prisonexp.org/response retrieved 03/05/25

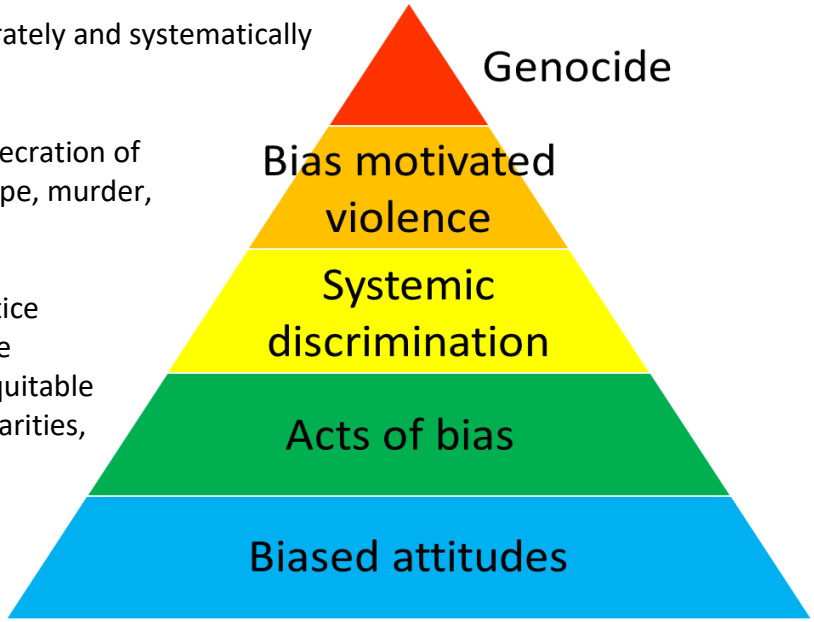
[17] VSauce (2018) The Stanford prison experiment. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KND_bBDE8RQ Retrieved 03/05/25

The Pyramid of Hate

The previous sections have explored what may lead 'ordinary' people to commit acts of harm. This section explores how people may gradually come to hate others and therefore be more willing to commit or support acts of harm.

The Pyramid of Hate[18] model shows the gradual progression large groups of people can go through in order to become more hateful towards a particular group. It is represented as a pyramid to show how foundational layers build opportunities for the next stage to take place. It also shows how upper layers have more life-threatening consequences.

If harmful behaviours or attitudes become normal or accepted in one layer of the pyramid then it is more likely that people will progress to the next layer. Challenging or interrupting the behaviours and attitudes at the lower layers makes it more difficult for discrimination and hate to flourish.



Genocide - The act or intent to deliberately and systematically annihilate an entire people

Bias motivated violence - threats, desecration of property, vandalism, arson, assault, rape, murder, terrorism, hate speech

Systemic discrimination - criminal justice disparities, inequitable school resource distribution, housing segregation, inequitable employment opportunities, wage disparities, voter restrictions and suppression, unequal media representation

Acts of bias - non-inclusive language, insensitive remarks, microaggressions, biased and belittling jokes, cultural appropriation, social avoidance and/or exclusion, name-calling, ridicule, bullying, slurs, dehumanization

Biased attitudes - stereotyping, fear of differences, justifying biases by seeking out like-minded people, seeking out information to confirm one's existing beliefs and/or biases, lack of self-reflection or awareness of privilege

[18] Anti Defamation League (2018). The Pyramid of Hate. https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/pyramid-hate-en-espanol Retrieved 25/04/25

When Actors Nurture and Facilitate Hate

Actors may nurture hate against a particular group of people or organisation. In business, community or wider society this can be a tool for bolstering their popularity, power or for changing regulations to suit their agenda. Techniques they may use include:

Scapegoating – Blaming a person or group for something when the fault actually lies elsewhere. Actors may create a narrative with an 'easy' answer for solving societies problems, which usually involves targeting one institution or group. "Your life would be better if we got rid of X people." The leader will gradually build a narrative that targets the scapegoated community and then position themselves as the person capable of solving the challenge.

Propaganda – information (or disinformation) of a biased or misleading nature that is used to promote a political cause or point of view. Actors may involve media elites and bureaucrats to publish information that helps to create 'enemies'. They may 'other' the enemy group as dangerous, greedy, unpredictable, culturally different, aggressive, faceless or dehumanised.

Demonisation – portraying something or someone as wicked and dangerous. It may be a physical danger or a threat to cultural norms, beliefs and way of life. This is an extension of scapegoating and propaganda. At a large scale, demonising the other as criminal or dangerous creates a widespread state of fear which can be utilised in harmful ways.

Manufactured crisis – when actors use language to imply there is an emergency. This is usually to bypass the normal mechanisms of decision making, checks and balances. This means that harmful actions may receive less scrutiny. For example, a homelessness charity may exaggerate the number of people it needs to house in a short time. Actors may suggest removing the usual housing criteria in order to make quick decisions, which may allow them to make quick decisions which actively discriminate against disliked groups.

Incremental transgressions – when 'bad' acts are committed gradually people are more likely to commit them compared to being asked to do something very harmful straight away. People will not usually start by advocating for violence – they gradually use scapegoating, propaganda, demonisation and manufactured crisis to warm people up to the idea of taking more violent forms of action.

If you were asked to commit an act of harm you would probably say no.
However, you might be persuaded to change your mind if someone in a trusted authority built up to it by creating a narrative that was powerful and a circumstance that felt necessary.

'Would you approve the euthanasia of people who suffer from long term dementia and have a low quality of life?' 'Would you authorise the humane erasure of dangerous unreformed criminals if we faced an overpopulation crisis?

Scapegoating, propaganda, demonisation, incremental transgressions and an eventual 'manufactured crisis' may encourage a culture that agrees with violence that they otherwise wouldn't.

The 10 Stages of Genocide

Genocide - the deliberate and systematic killing or persecution of a large number of people from a particular national or ethnic group with the aim of destroying that nation or group.

The genocide convention[19] defines this further as … any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group:

(a) Killing members of the group;
(b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
(c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
(d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
(e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group

Any country or society can be at risk of committing genocide if the conditions are right. For a genocide to occur there needs to be mass support and action towards it, which requires leadership. Leaders may seek to commit genocide because they have an ideological grievance with a particular group (fear, disgust, sense of superiority). They may also use a genocide as a way to bolster their own power – using a manufactured state of emergency to reduce regulations and / or to play the hero in a war against a particular group.

Dr Gregory Stanton is a leading expert in genocide. He founded Genocide Watch in 1999 – an organisation which provides education on Genocide, supports research and monitors the warning signs for genocide across the world[20]. Their website shows that an alarming number of countries show the early warning sides for genocide as particular groups are being negatively targeted by leaders and the media.

Stanton developed a theory called the 8 stages of genocide[21] and then later amended it to the 10 stages of genocide[22]. He said that genocide cannot be committed by an individual or small group; rather, it takes the cooperation of a large number of people and the state. The stages of genocide are predictable and knowing them means that citizens are better equipped to identify the warning signs and stop the process from continuing to the next stage. It is much easier to prevent the early stages from progressing than it is the later stages.

The stages may not occur in a purely linear fashion. They may overlap and previous stages must continue to be in operation for later stages to be accessible.
The table on the following page outlines all 10 stages and what can be done to prevent them.

[19] United Nations. (1948). Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Paris. Document retrieved https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1951/01/19510112%2008-12%20PM/Ch_IV_1p.pdf 24/04/25
[20] Genocide Watch. The 10 stages of genocide. https://www.genocidewatch.com/tenstages retrieved 25/04/25
[21] Stanton, G. H. (1996). The 8 Stages of Genocide. Presented as the first Working Paper (GS01) of the Yale Program in Genocide Studies in 1998.
[22] Stanton, G. H. (2013). The 10 Stages of Genocide.

Stage	Characteristics	Prevention
1. Classification	Groups of people are categorised into 'us and them' by ethnicity, race, religion or nationality.	• Create universal institutions that foster social cohesion. • Encourage mixing of people from different backgrounds to promote tolerance and cohesion.
2. Symbolisation	Giving names or symbols to members of the 'other group' in order to easily identify them by ethnicity, race, religion or nationality. This may include colours, dress or labels.	• Legally forbid symbols of hate. • Legally outlaw group markings, gang clothing or tribal scarring. • Gain public support for the outlaw of these symbols. • Find ways to reclaim symbols or deny their importance.
3. Discrimination	A dominant group uses laws, customs, and political power to deny some or all of the civil the rights of other groups.	• Pass and enforce laws prohibiting discrimination. • Ensure full citizenship and voting rights for all groups. • Give all individuals the right to sue the state, corporations and other individuals if their rights are violated.
4. Dehumanisation	The target group is likened to animals, insects, vermin, diseases or as sub-human. This makes the justification for killing them easier.	• Denounce dehumanising propaganda. • Punish spreaders and perpetrators of dehumanising propaganda and hate speech. • Leaders who incite genocide should be banned from international travel and have their foreign finances frozen.
5. Organisation	A state, it's army or a state supported militia begin creating plans for genocidal killing. This may include training and arming people.	• Outlaw membership in these militias. • Punish leaders of these groups and limit their travel so that they cannot raise funds or acquire weapons. • Impose arms embargoes on the countries involved • Create commissions of inquiry
6. Polarisation	Further propaganda is used to amplify prejudices between groups. Interactions between groups are prohibited. This may include segregation laws. Moderate / sympathetic members of the group in power are silenced or killed.	• Protect the moderate members and human rights activists. • Seize the assets of the oppressors and refuse their access to international travel. • Use international sanctions on extremist governments.

Stage	Characteristics	Prevention
7. Preparation	Mass killing is planned. Victims are identified and separated because of their ethnic or religious identity. Euphemistic language may be used to hide intentions or make the proposal more palatable (cleansing, counter terrorism).	• Arms embargos and commissions to enforce them. • Prosecution of those who are involved in incitement and conspiracy to commit genocide
8. Persecution	Victims are identified and isolated based on their ethnic or religious identity. Death lists are drawn up. In state sponsored genocides, members of victim groups may be forced to wear identifying symbols and live in ghettos. Their property is often confiscated.	• A genocidal emergency must be declared. • The UN security council must be mobilised to assist victims in their protection and self-defence. • Humanitarian aid should be provided to victims, refugees and survivors.
9. Extermination	The killings begin. The perpetrators see their actions as "extermination" since they do not consider their victims to be entirely human. Some groups retaliate which can lead to mutual genocide.	• Only large-scale armed interventions can stop genocide. • The international community must support the operations by providing air transport, equipment and financial support. • Safe areas for refugees should be established.
10. Denial	The perpetrators of the genocide deny having committed their crimes. Victims are often blamed. Evidence is hidden and witnesses are intimidated.	• An international tribunal or national court must prosecute the criminals. • Evidence of genocide must be published and used in public education

The stages of genocide are also outlined in a helpful video here[23]

Stanton suggests that the two best preventions for genocide are:

- widespread education about it in order to help citizens recognise the stages and counter them early
- developing a social and cultural tolerance for diversity so that no group is targeted for genocide or that if leaders do target groups, the citizens can respond in solidarity

[23] Sprouts youtube channel (2023). The 10 stages of genocide. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAsRu1ghd2A Retrieved 24/04/25

Home Group 2

Today we looked at many things that contribute to hate and harm. We also begun to explore how to counteract some of them.

- Did anything surprise you or stand out to you today?
- How can you play an active role in preventing and countering hate?

You may like to record any reflections from your discussion (being mindful of confidentiality).

Recruitment Simulation

Your task is to evaluate the candidate whose information you have been given.

On a scale from 0-100%, how likely are you to hire your candidate for the role of Hospice Nurse (a nurse who cares for people as they are dying)?

List three (3) adjectives to describe you candidate.

Rating from 0-100%
3 adjectives to describe your candidate
Any further notes on your group's decision?

Trust

Think of 6 people you trust the most who are **not** family members. Put their initials in the column headings. Tick off every trait you have in common with them…

Initials:						
Gender						
Age Bracket						
Ethnicity						
Faith						
Educational Level						
Income Bracket						
Native Language						
Professional Background						
Total in common						

What do you notice about your circle of trust?

Unconscious Bias

Bias is a prejudice against or preference towards something which is usually considered unfair.

Conscious or explicit bias is when we do this and are aware of it

Unconscious or implicit bias is when we are unaware these biases impact our decisions

Types of bias

Age Bias – when a person is preferred or avoided because of their age. This may relate to real / perceived physical characteristics, behavioural traits or capabilities. e.g. older people must have more experience, younger people more energy. Older people won't be good with technology.

Affinity Bias – a tendency to prefer people who share similar traits to you.
The circle of trust exercise demonstrates how your inner circle are likely to share common traits.

Attribution Bias – when you make assumptions about a person's behaviours or capabilities that may be inaccurate. These are often judgements. E.g. someone drove in front of you because they are a bad driver, they aren't here on time because they are lazy.

Beauty Bias – preferring people who are seen as typically attractive. Or judging people based on their attractiveness. E.g. women who look attractive receive harsher sentences for fraud but lesser sentences for some other crimes.

Confirmation Bias – a tendency to search for, interpret, favour, and remember information in a way that confirms or supports your existing opinions, beliefs or values. E.g. I won't eat at this restaurant because my friend got sick there, thinking someone looks suspicious and then interpreting more of their behaviour that way.

Conformity Bias – a tendency to behave like the people around us in order to fit in. e.g. cheating if others do, agreeing with a group decision, recycling because your family do. In Asch's line experiment[24] stooges gave an incorrect answer before the participant spoke. On average, the real participants conformed to the incorrect answers 32% of the time.

Gender Bias – when a person is preferred or avoided because of their gender. This may relate to real / perceived physical characteristics, behavioural traits or capabilities. The car accident scenario shows how many people will jump to a creative solution before realising the surgeon is the mother. e.g. women make better nurses, men are better at sports, women get emotional

Height Bias – preferring people who are taller (associated with strength and success).

[24] Asch, S. E. (1951). Effects of group pressure upon the modification and distortion of judgment. In H. Guetzkow (ed.) *Groups, leadership and men*. Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Press.

Name Bias – when you make assumptions about a person based on their name and then prefer or dislike them. e.g. names from different races, gender names, religious names

The Contrast Effect – not making decisions based on individual merits but by comparing to recent others.

The Halo Effect – when one piece of information or feature creates a strong preference for something e.g. appearance, reputation, trait

The Horns Effect – when one piece of information or feature creates an aversion for something e.g. appearance, reputation, trait

Reducing Biases: What can you as an individual do?

- Be aware that biases exist and which ones may affect you
- Commit to watching yourself and see if you can bring awareness to your biases
- Work on expanding your empathy to people unlike you
- Take a purposeful pause: biases live in the quick-thinking part of your brain
- Take action to put right biases that have already occurred – apologise, change policies, education

Reducing Biases: What can organizations do?

- When hiring, remove unnecessary information (e.g. CV's without names)
- Decide on criteria for decision-making before making decisions
- Use groups to make decisions
- Use checklists to ensure you are using previously agreed upon criteria, also forces decision-making to be slower

Micro Aggressions

What are microaggressions?

Daily verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative bias toward any group, particularly culturally marginalized groups

Microaggressions might seem small or insignificant, especially to people outside of a marginalised group. However, their effects can build up over time and they can have a detrimental impact on a person's wellbeing.

Often, microaggressions invalidate the identity or experiences of members of a marginalised group and suggest that they do not belong, and will never belong, to the majority group.

The fact that micro-aggressions are often subtle can make them harder to tackle than more overt forms of discrimination.

What can microaggressions look like?

Avoiding sitting next to somebody wearing religious clothing. - This can indicate discomfort, suspicion, fear, and/or prejudice towards the person's religious beliefs, making them feel isolated or unwelcome based on their appearance or faith.

"I don't see colour; we're all the same inside." - This actually dismisses the experiences, identities, and systemic oppression faced by people with darker skin tones. It overlooks the importance of acknowledging and addressing racial inequality.

"I'm so OCD about that stuff." - Using "OCD" casually downplays the challenges faced by people with OCD (a medically diagnosed condition), who often experience intrusive thoughts and compulsive behaviours that can significantly disrupt daily life.

Calling the male workers “boy” or female workers “maid” instead of learning their names. This is dismissive of someone’s individual identity.

Ignoring someone who has a visible disability. - This can suggest discomfort or disinterest, making the disabled person feel excluded or devalued, and reinforcing the harmful attitudes that imply they are different or less worthy of interaction.

Clutching your belongings when a person of colour walks past. - This implies that the individual is perceived as a threat simply because of their racial or ethnic background. This can make the person feel unwelcome and reinforces harmful stereotypes.

Saying “It’s nice that your husband *lets* you work.” To a woman. This minimizes the woman’s sense of choice and autonomy in working and implies men make the decisions in relationships.

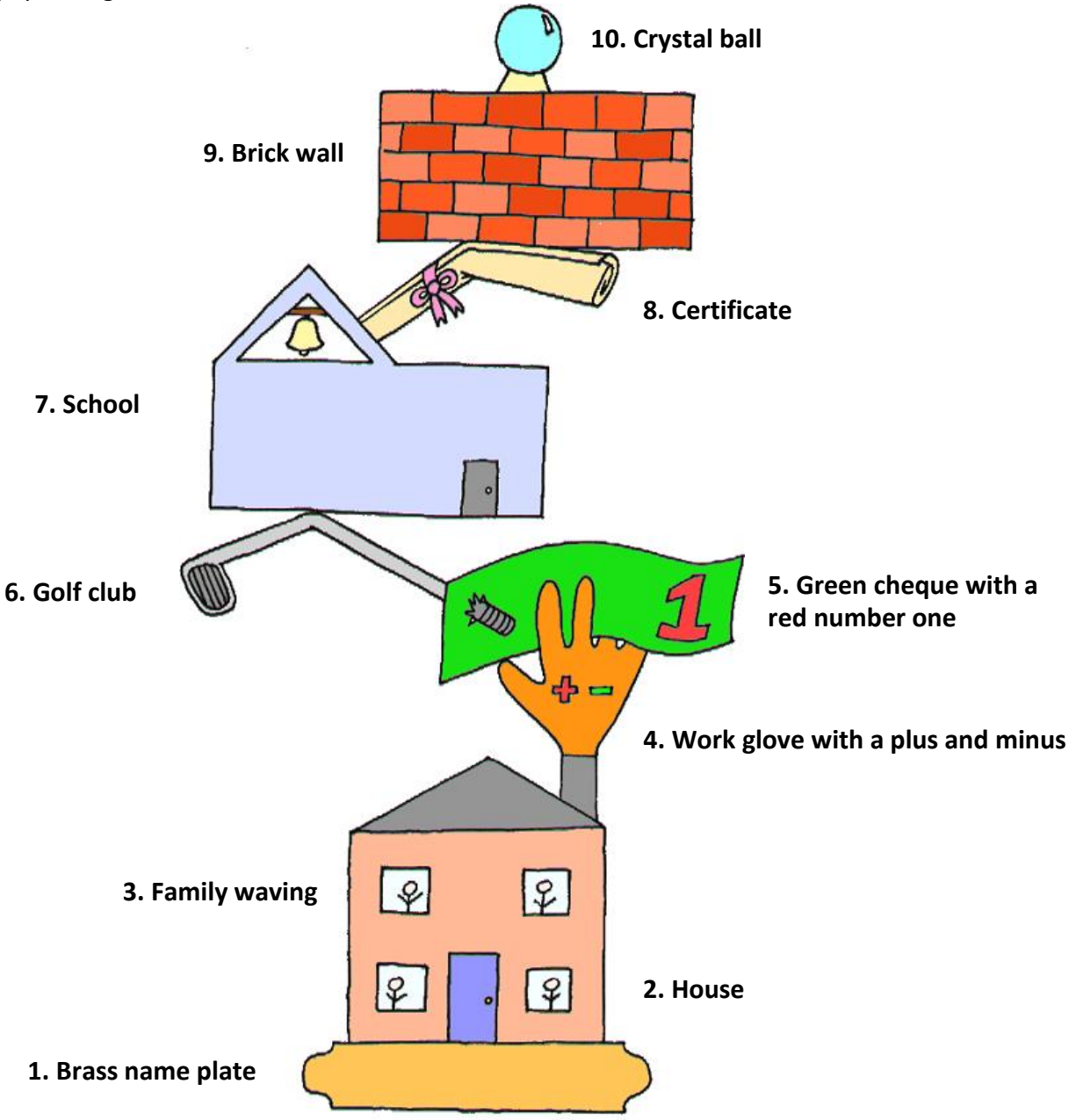
Intervening with micro aggressions

Statement	Impact Why is this statement problematic? Who might it hurt and why?	Intent How might I assume positive intent in this situation?	Intervention What might a bystander do or say to intervene?
Bahraini to someone with a dark skin tone: "Where are you from? Your Arabic is perfect and you speak without an accent!"			
Man to a woman in "western" dress: "I am surprised you feel comfortable wearing that."			
"You don't look Bahraini. Where are you *really* from?"			
"Women are natural communicators because they're in touch with their emotions."			
"I don't see difference. Everyone is the same, we're all human."			

Meaningful Conversations

A simple way to counter bias, stereotypes, deindividuation and hate is to have meaningful conversations with people from communities and demographics different to your own. This helps you to connect to the other as an individual and build bridges of understanding.

Starting a conversation with a stranger can feel a little daunting. The trick to a good conversation is making the other person feel positive – understood, respected and heard. People's favourite topic of conversation is often themselves… and the best way to get them to talk about themselves is to ask open ended questions. This mnemonic is an adaptation of Dale Carnegie's 'Conversation Stack'[25]. Each part of the image also has 'actions' to help you remember it, and it gives you ideas for questions that may spark a good conversation.



[25] Carnegie, D. (1981). *How to win friends & influence people*. New York: Simon and Schuster

Each section of the conversation stack represents a topic area for which there are multiple questions that you could ask. You don't have to ask every single question or follow a set order. The other person may also ask about you and the conversation may evolve into other topics. Engage in a two way conversation as naturally as possible – these are only ideas to get you started if you are stuck.

Conversation stack feature	Possible questions
1. Brass name plate	• What is your name? • What does your name it mean? • Is there a story behind your name?
2. House	• Where do you live / where are you based? • Where have you lived? • What is your area / community like? • What do you like / dislike about the place you live? • Where would you like to live in future?
3. Family waving	• What family do you have? (Tip: Don't ask 'do you have… children, a brother, a partner because this is a closed question and could be sensitive) • How do you spend time with family?
4. Work glove with a plus and minus	• What do you do for a living? • What do you like about it / find challenging about it? • How long have you had that role? • What work would like to do in future?
5. Green cheque with a red number one	• What was your first job? (first paycheque) • How did it lead to what you do now? • What did you learn from that first role?
6. Golf club	• What are your hobbies? • What do you do for fun / to relax? • How do you spend your free time?
7. School	• Where did you study? • What did you study? • What were the most / least interesting parts of your education? • How have your studies helped you in your work / life?
8. Certificate	• What are your achievements? • What are you proud of?
9. Brick wall	• What challenges are you facing? • How are you tackling your challenges? • What challenges have you overcome to get where you are now?
10. Crystal ball	• What are your goals for the future? • Where do you see yourself in 2 / 5 / 10 years time? • What is your plan to reach those goals? • What would you like the world to be like in the future?

Avoiding micro aggressions – some of these topic areas could lead to questions which are unintentionally hurtful or derogatory if they are not used carefully. For example, asking someone "Where are you from… really from / originally from?' implies they don't belong here.

Ask yourself "Would I ask the same question of someone who was culturally similar to me?" This can help you notice if there is a bias at play.

Language that Fosters Hate and Harm

You completed two very similar quizzes asking you to show your level of agreement with these statements. The statements are in pairs, where the underlying meanings remain the same but the particular word choices differ. The average scores for the whole group will be presented to you.

Statement	Average level of agreement
Religious fanatics should be allowed to practice their delusional beliefs in my community.	
People of faith should be allowed to practice their differing beliefs in my community.	
A state should not waste valuable resources on funding work-avoidant benefit claimants	
A state should not spend money on providing benefits to those unable to work	
Companies have the right to downsize their workforce in order to protect their long-term sustainability	
Companies have the right to fire employees in order to maintain their profit margins	
Countries are justified in preventing the barrage of illegal aliens from invading their borders.	
Countries are justified in denying undocumented migrants and asylum seekers from entering their country.	
Hiring crippled or retarded people is detrimental to a workplace.	
Hiring disabled or neurodivergent people is detrimental to a workplace	

What do you notice about how language choices affected the group's responses?

Language is a powerful tool for fostering hate and harm because it signals whether to treat others positively or negatively and plays a role in persuasion. It is also used to create cultural norms. The repeated use of old language maintains the status quo and the repeating new language creates new norms – which can be positive or negative.

We have a vast repertoire of language to choose from when expressing ourselves, which means that we (and others) can choose language that emphasises the viewpoint or agenda we want to uphold. In the language quiz, similar meaning words were used but they have very different connotations:

- Illegal aliens – undocumented migrants
- Retarded – neurodivergent
- Fire - downsize

People who are seeking to create a particular narrative about themselves or the other will select language that best supports their agenda.

Racism, sexism, ableism, classism, and other oppressions are perpetuated through everyday language that repeatedly describes people and situations in order to create a standard understanding. This is used to validate or reinforce some identities, experiences and ways of being whilst treating others as abnormal, wrong or lesser – sewing division and intolerance.

If we want to counter speech that fosters harm and hate then it is important to be able to recognise different kinds of language that can be used. The table on the following pages outlines some types of language, the effect they have and how to respond.

Type	Definition	Purpose	Examples	Responses
Dehumanising Language	Language that likens members of the target group as animalistic, less than human and therefore underserving of basic human rights.	People generally feel uncomfortable about treating others badly. But if those others have been repeatedly compared to rats or diseases then this helps to justify their mistreatment.	Vermin, poisonous weeds, cockroaches, snakes, rats, worms, parasites, savages, apes, hordes, floods, infesting, onslaught, monstrous, brutes, plagues, pests	Humanise people: • Tell the stories of the people involved rather than referring to one group • Give people the space to share their own stories and experiences • Challenge, correct or rephrase dehumanising language
Pathologising Language	Language that treats something or someone as though abnormal or diseased when they actually fall within normal variation.	The language implies they are damaged, living in a state of suffering and lacking self determination. This may be used as a justification for ignoring them, excluding them or making decisions on their behalf.	victim, afflicted, suffering, stricken, hysterical, impaired, crippled, challenged, struggling, delusional, perverted, deviant, abnormal	Normalise people: • Highlight the wide variety of human experiences • Highlight the lived experiences of the person / group to create understanding and awareness • Use language that is more dignified and focuses on ability and choice
Invisibleizing Language	Language choices that make a group of people seem non existent, relabels them as something else OR language that completely ignores / omits the existence of a group.	Making a particular group invisible gradually erases public awareness of their lived experiences. This may be used if a group wishes to deny their rights, withdraw services from them or even try to eliminate that group.	• Using the term illegal aliens instead of asylum seekers to invisibleize the concept of asylum • Using the terms 'biological sex' and 'biological males' to ignore the experience of transgender people (people whose gender identity is different to the sex they were assigned at birth) • Saying all the real Indians have died off to erase the lived experience of living Native Americans	Make experiences visible: • Use the preferred or accurate labels for groups • Create and spread stories of people and groups at risk of being erased • Question reporting that ignores groups and challenge them to include their perspectives

Type	Definition	Purpose	Examples	Responses
Coded Language	Language choices that communicate prejudice and bias in covert ways, consciously or unconsciously.	This may be used by people who know that violent or overtly harmful language isn't socially acceptable, but still desire to communicate their disdain, intolerance, and judgment of another. It allows the speaker to perpetuate social divides without damaging their reputation.	• Saying a certain part of town is the 'rough part' as a code for a racial group or class that live there • Saying a woman is 'bossy' as a code for opinionated and too vocal • Saying a group 'doesn't hold our shared values' as a code for negatively portraying cultural or racial differences and creating a sense of mistrust	• Ask speakers to clarify what they mean in order to make messages overt, so they can be acted upon • Educate the speaker on why that language use is harmful and what alternatives they could use • Share narratives which use more positive labels and language for the same scenario
Euphemistic Language	Language choices that deliberately avoid language that might make others uncomfortable.	Euphemisms are often used in everyday language for taboo subjects (bodily functions, death, intimacy). But they can also be used to mask instances of harm and make them seem more palatable. People may use euphemisms to neutralise the narrative around an uncomfortable issue.	• Our soldiers killed 6 civilians > Six non combatants were caught in the collateral damage • Refugees were imprisoned in detention camps > migrants were housed in a federal shelter • The political leader lied > the political leader withheld relevant data	• Ask speakers to clarify what they mean in order to make messages overt, so they can be acted upon • Challenge speakers by saying 'Do you mean ___?' to uncover harm that is being hidden • Avoid repeating or using others euphemistic language – use more factual language instead.
Minimizing Language	Language choices that are usually well meaning but that ignores or downplays a particular group's struggle to have their experiences heard and their rights adhered to.	The speaker of minimising language usually believes they are supporting diversity but fails to understand the nuanced context that they are commenting on. Minimizing language can maintain norms that keep certain groups oppressed or at a disadvantage.	• When someone says 'Black lives matter' the speaker responds with 'All lives matter' • When someone started a hashtag about protecting women from male violence, the speaker responds '#Not all men' • In a discussion about racism the speaker says 'I don't see colour'.	• Respectfully educate the speaker on why the target group is using particular language (and avoiding others) to support their cause. • Read around issues in order to understand the nuanced context

Avoiding 'Political Correctness'

When we are thinking about avoiding harmful language, a term that is popularly used is Political Correctness. This is often used to communicate the idea that someone shouldn't use language that may offend a particular group of people.

Whilst this may seem useful, the term was originally created to make the concept of sensitive speech seem worthless and ridiculous – thus allowing people to continue their existing speech patterns without consequences.

- It made out that language had a 'correct' and 'incorrect' use and therefore some people were restricting the speech of others. This provokes discomfort and resistance because people care about their rights of expression.
- The implication that you should avoid offending others portrays the 'other' as being overly sensitive and needing to toughen up. It distracts from addressing the harm in the speaker's language.
- Political correctness places the focus on individual sentences and words rather than the wider context. Asking someone 'where are you from?' may be acceptable for some people but an act of bias / harm to someone who is regularly treated as not belonging to a particular community. The speaker may ask 'what's the problem, I only said ___'. Language always sits within a context so simply restricting what people can say will not prevent harm.

Instead of striving to be politically correct (avoiding offensive language) we may want to strive to use language that cares for others and is sensitive to biases, oppression and wider context. There is no standard term for this yet but examples may include:

- Sensitive language
- Nonviolent language
- Liberatory language
- Respectful language
- Conscious language
- Inclusive language
- Bias-free language

Hate Speech

Hate speech is a difficult topic to explore because:

- There are differing legal definitions of hate speech across the world.
- Hate speech definitions usually deal with the most extreme and explicit communications, leaving more subtle and common forms of problematic language unchecked.
- There is a difference between hate speech and incitement to violence.
- There are arguments about the boundary between hate speech and freedom of expression.

Definitions

UNESCO (2015)[26] say that **hate speech** refers to "expressions that support incitement to harm, especially discrimination, aggression, or violence, and may include but is not limited to speech that supports, commits, or encourages violent acts. It is also believed that hate speech is any expression that creates an atmosphere of abuse and intolerance triggered by the intended discriminatory, aggressive, and violent attacks."

Elliot et al (2016)[27] define **hate speech** as "malicious, bias-motivated speech that targets a person or group of people because of some of their actual or perceived innate characteristics. This type of speech expresses discriminatory, intimidating, dismissive, hostile, or biased attitudes against those characteristics, which include gender, race, religion, color, national origin, or disability. Hate speech aims to harm, dehumanize, harass, intimidate, demolish, humiliate, instigate indifference, and brutalize target groups".

The United Nations (2019) says that the term **hate speech** is understood as "any kind of communication in speech, writing or behavior, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, color, descent, gender or other identity factor"[28]

They also add that "Rather than prohibiting hate speech as such, international law prohibits the incitement to discrimination, hostility and violence. Incitement is a very dangerous form of speech, because it explicitly and deliberately aims at triggering discrimination, hostility and violence, which may also lead to or include terrorism or atrocity crimes. Hate speech that does not reach the threshold of incitement is not something that international law requires States to prohibit. It is important to underline that even when not prohibited, hate speech may be harmful."

Common factors within hate speech definitions seem to be:

- Malicious, harmful or discriminatory in intent
- Targeting a particular person or group based on their characteristics

Although it is not strictly in the definition, researchers have noted that hate speech often targets minorities within a population.

[26] UNESCO. (2015). Global Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development - Special Focus on Digital in 2015.
[27] Elliott, C., Chuma, W., Gendi, Y.E., Marko, D., & A. Patel (2016). Hate Speech: Key concept paper. Media, Conflict and Democratisation Working Papers.
[28] United Nations. (2019). Strategy and plan of action on hate speech. Retrieved 04/05/25 https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/advising-and-mobilizing/Action_plan_on_hate_speech_EN.pdf

Hate vs incitement

Incitement describes provoking unlawful behaviour or urging someone to behave unlawfully. It is speech that actively encourages the illegal acts against another. All incitement is a form of hate speech – but not all hate speech is a form of incitement. Some hate speech may be more subtle and may not directly encourage unlawful acts.

Incitement – You should assault X person / people.
Hate speech – X person / people are a disease to our community and have no place here.

In the second example individuals may take it upon themselves to harass or commit violence against that group of people because of the messaging they heard, but it is a not a direct call to commit an unlawful act.

Types of Hate Speech

Hate speech takes 3 forms according to the level of severity[29].

Type of speech	Features
Hate speech to be prohibited	This kind of speech is dangerous and should be banned in order to prevent devastating effects. This includes speech that **incites** others to: • Kill a person or group of people • Cause physical or psychological injury to a group of people. • Intentionally causing material damage to the property of people. • Making some attempts to prevent children from being born to a certain group of people. • Forcibly removing children from their families.
Hate speech that ***can*** be prohibited (but doesn't have to be).	This kind of speech may threaten violence, humiliate or mock others but does not directly incite. States have permission to ban or restrict these types of speech to protect national security and public stability, health, and morals
Unbanned hate speech	Speech that is perceived to hurt the feelings of a person or a group, but which are considered very mild. This type of expression may be detrimental to tolerance, standards of morality, or respect for others. Although not prohibited by law, it can instil intolerance.

Hate speech may increase in severity over time – beginning with unpleasant derogatory comments that create an out-group dynamic, then becoming more hateful and using dehumanising and demonising language to breed dislike and mistrust of a group. This normalises a negative view of that group which finally leads to using language that incites discrimination or violence towards that group. This means that it is important to tackle hate speech at its earliest stages so that it does not progress[30].

Unbanned hate speech may still be punishable in other ways if it contradicts workplace bullying policies or civil laws in a country (libel, defamation).

[29] Rumadi, R. (2017). Hate speech: Concept and problem. *Islamic Studies Journal for Social Transformation, 1(2),* 130-139.
[30] Alomari, K. Methods of countering hate speech, Cultural Communication Series

Hate speech and Freedom of Expression

Freedom of expression or free speech is a right outlined in the UN Declaration of human rights:[31]

"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

This creates a difficult situation where someone may hold hurtful or derogatory opinions about another group and may wish to express them as a personal right. While international law protects free speech, there are instances where speech can legitimately restricted under the same law – such as when it violates the rights of others, or, advocates hatred and incites discrimination or violence. Deciding where this boundary lies can be quite difficult.

- Speech that encourages violence and discrimination against people (e.g. intentional incitement to racial hatred) should be prohibited
- Speech that criticises or challenges ideas or the status quo (e.g. criticising a government, nation, or religious idea) should be protected – even if it is offensive or unpopular – because it lets us learn about different ideas and challenge those in power.
- Speech that is hurtful towards others but does not directly incite violence is a problematic grey area. It is perhaps best not to prohibit or criminalise it, but instead to educate around it to build greater tolerance.

The UN (2012)[32] has proposed six standards to consider for criminally prohibited forms of expression:

Standard	Rationale
Context (socially and politically)	This may reveal the intent of the speech as well as the likelihood of inciting discrimination, hostility or violence against the target group
Speaker	The speaker's position, status and power should be assessed in relation to the audience being addressed
Intent	There is a distinction between direct intent and simple recklessness or negligence
Content and form	The degree to which the speech is provocative and direct, the style of speech, nature of arguments and balance in the speech
Extent of the speech act	This includes the reach, publicity, magnitude, audience size, dissemination means, frequency and quantity of speech
Likelihood and imminence (of incitement)	This is the degree of risk of harm the speech act poses to a person or group – regardless of whether the harm is committed

[31] United Nations. (1948). Universal Declaration of Human Rights https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights Retrieved 04/05/25

[32] United Nations. (2012). United Nations Report on the Promotion and Protection of The Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression.

Drivers of hate speech

The United Nations (2012)[33] names some of the following factors which have led to an increase in hate speech:

- social media
- migration flows
- population trends
- decline of local economies
- emergence of terrorism
- ethnic or religious differences
- political bias
- social uncertainty
- increased tendency to stigmatise certain groups
- racial profiling
- unfair provision of resources
- demagogic statements by opportunistic politicians
- irresponsible news coverage from mass media

Al-Aqrabah et al. (2015)[34] identified ten main reasons for the emergence of hate speech:

1. Misconception of the other.
2. Fear of competition.
3. The perception that the other is contrary to you, or is your enemy.
4. General culture and education.
5. How history is understood.
6. Media.
7. Lack of information.
8. Preconceptions.
9. Absence of introducing generations to aesthetic aspects of society.
10. Absence of national renewal and young generations living according to the vision of the past

It is worth highlighting that some of these factors tap into people's genuine fears and concerns (security, economy) but rather than handling them constructively, hatred towards another group is used to channel or distract from those challenges – especially during times of election or decision making.

A good way to counter hate would be to address these underlying challenges in a more constructive way. If people's physical and emotional needs were met then they would be less likely to channel their concerns into hating other groups.

[33] United Nations. (2012). United Nations report on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression. https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n12/501/25/pdf/n1250125.pdf Retrieved 04/05/25

[34] Al-Aqrabah, Fatima, Al-Hiyari, Sana, Momani, Kholoud, Rawabdeh, Manal and Malkawi, Ansam. (2015). A Proposal for a Policy Paper on Addressing Hate Speech on the Internet. Center for Public Policy.

General strategy for tackling hate speech

The **UN's** strategy and plan on hate speech[35] provides some recommendations for tackling hate speech in general. Many of these are targeted at the organisational and societal levels of action.

1. Recognise, monitor and collect data and analyse hate speech trends.
2. Address root causes, drivers and actors of hate speech.
3. Engage and support the victims of hate speech.
4. Convene with key actors and reframe the problem in ways that make solutions attainable.
5. Engage with media to address hate speech narratives and promote tolerance, non-discrimination, pluralism and freedom of opinions / expression
6. Using technology and encouraging more research on the relationship between the misuse of the Internet and social media in terms f spreading hate speech and the factors that drive individuals to violence.
7. Using formal and informal education as a tool for addressing and countering hate speech, promoting the values and skills of global citizenship education, and enhancing media and information literacy.
8. Fostering peaceful, inclusive, and just societies to address the root causes and drivers of hate speech.
9. Engaging in advocacy to highlight hate speech trends of concern.
10. Developing and using guidance for external communication to address, counter, and mitigate the impact of hate speech, as well as counteract its impact, without restricting the right to freedom of expression.
11. Leveraging partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including those in the tech industry.
12. Building the skills of UN staff at leadership and working level to understand and address hate speech.
13. Supporting Member States in the field of capacity-building and policy development to address hate speech

The **Council of Europe** (2016)[36] also recommends that public education has a role to play in tackling hate speech:

1. Improving awareness and understanding of the need for diversity and dialogue within the framework of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.
2. Promoting and clarifying mutual respect and understanding within the community.
3. Facilitating and highlighting intercultural dialogue.
4. Combating misinformation, negative stereotypes, and stigmas.
5. Developing specific educational programs for children, youth, public officials, and the general public, as well as enhancing the skills of teachers.
6. Encouraging the quick response of public figures, especially political and religious leaders, to hate speech so as not to restrict or condemn, but rather to seek to consolidate the values threatened by hate speech

[35] United Nations. (2019). Strategy and plan of action on hate speech. Retrieved 04/05/25 https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/advising-and-mobilizing/Action_plan_on_hate_speech_EN.pdf

[36] Council of Europe. (2016). General Policy Recommendation No. 15 of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance on Combating Hate Speech. https://rm.coe.int/ecri-general-policy-recommendation-no-15-on-combating-hate-speech/16808b5b01 Retrieved 04/05/25

Responding directly to hate speech

The Council of Europe has a response toolkit[37] to help individuals navigate how to respond to hate speech. You can use their online calculator to report a particular incident and get recommendations for how to respond.

They note that acting against hate speech can have negative consequences (for you, the victim or wider discourse) if you do not choose a strategy carefully. It is important to show proportionality. Both overreacting and underreacting to hate speech can lead to unwanted or unethical results.

If you come across an instance of hate speech:

- Check the hate-speech legislation in your country
- Check the Community Standards of the platform where you came across hate-speech (if applicable);
- Always double-check any information you will use (sources, trustworthiness, be aware of bias).
- Record the instance of hate speech in case you need to use it as later evidence in an investigation or court case

Choosing a response:

- **Take no action** – if the incident is minor or there is a chance you will inflame tensions then it may be best not to respond
- **Engage in counter discourse** – challenge the hateful expression using counter narratives. This tries to change the perspective of the speaker. (If so, remember your conflict resolution principles and to use Non Violent Communication).
- **Create new narratives** – spread positive new perspectives on the targets of the hate message. This tries to change the perspective of the audience.
- **Censorship** - blocking, taking content down or restricting access to content (or reporting to those who have the power to do so)
- **Legal action** – initiate legal action against the people engaging in hate speech using civil, administrative or even criminal law.

It is important to remember that both censorship and legal action restrict the rights of the other person on the basis of protecting the safety of others. It is important to be certain that others are at risk before taking these courses of action.

This is an example of the paradox of tolerance. In order to promote tolerance within a society, we may need to be intolerant towards the views and expressions of those who are intolerant and cause harm to others.

[37] Council of Europe. Toolkit for human rights speech - Guides and calculators for analysing hate speech https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-speech/analyse Retrieved 04/05/25

Look at the examples of hate speech and harmful speech on your table. Pick some to respond to.

Example 1

What aspects of the speech are problematic? Who might it harm and how?
How might you respond if you witnessed this speech being used?

Example 2

What aspects of the speech are problematic? Who might it harm and how?
How might you respond if you witnessed this speech being used?

Example 3

What aspects of the speech are problematic? Who might it harm and how?
How might you respond if you witnessed this speech being used?

Hate in the Media and Online

Those in positions of power and the media have the most influence over the words that are used and the stories that are told in public discourse. It is very important to hold them to account to ensure that they are using language responsibly.

"We are all the media now. There's the press, tv, production companies and then there's anyone with a phone."

Traditional Media – This is often used to refer to 'traditional' media which includes newspapers, radio and broadcast television. It may also extend to the websites of those organisations. These kinds of media are usually responsible for sharing information of public interest and so in many countries these kinds of media are subject to standards or rules about what can be published and shared.

Other forms of long-standing media, usually in physical form:

- Magazines
- Leaflets
- Advertisements
- Billboards / posters
- Direct mail
- Movies

Social media – This generally refers to digital platforms (public or private) run by private companies which allow users to communicate. Social media are not subject to the same regulations as traditional media, although some countries are seeking to introduce regulations on them. Each social media company will have its own 'community standards' that it agrees to uphold and should moderate content in line with those standards.

Other digital media – digital technology is changing fast which leads to other forms of media appearing that we are less familiar with and the norms around them change quickly:

- Podcasts
- Youtube / online videos
- Online newsletters
- Message board threads (Substack / Reddit)

Where is the money?

All media takes time and money to produce and is therefore biased by how it gains its money. It is worth thinking about this when considering the content and purpose of particular messages.

Government funding – some media is funded by taxation of the public or government funding in order to provide a service for citizens. This means it is more likely to conform to rules and standards, but it may also be subject to political restrictions of the government funding it.

Public funding – some media may be owned and funded by a community itself through crowd funding or a co-operative organisation. They are usually the producers and users of the media. The people within the community will usually determine its content and purpose.

Private funding – an individual or group of individuals. This may be because they believe in supporting a particular ideology / message / cause or they may be shareholders funding a form of media in order to gain a share of profits. In the latter example, the messages may change depending on what is deemed to be most profitable.

Advertising funding – media that attracts many viewers or viewers of desirable demographics may receive funds from advertisers wishing to reach those audiences. Advertisements may be a small segment of that media's output or they may shape the media output by trying to present a particular lifestyle or ideology for its viewers to aspire to.

Social media advertising – a notable problem with many social media platforms is that they are funded by advertising, which relies on user engagement. The more users who are active on a site and engaged (liking, clicking, commenting) then the more desirable the platform is to advertisers. This incentivises platforms to develop algorithms that maximise engagement. Unfortunately, the content which seems to be the most engaging to our human nature is that which is controversial, hateful or outrageous. Many social media algorithms increase people's exposure to this kind of content in order to serve their financial purposes – which contributes to a rise in polarisation and hate speech.

Getting the facts

All media will have some level of bias due to human nature. We choose to engage with the TV shows, newspapers and podcasts that suit our personal style and preferences. However, this can be particularly problematic when members of the public internalise biases as facts.

A further problem is that media is rife with false information:

Misinformation – false information which is spread by accident by someone who did not realise it was false. This may be because the content was taken out of context, misinterpreted, inaccurately captioned, mistranslated or someone was given the wrong information.

Disinformation – deliberately false information and content which is spread on purpose, usually to persuade people to think a certain way or to make money from engagement / advertising. This can include lies, fabricated images or video, misattribution of what people said, false statistics and more.

The persistent spread of a false claim (whether intentional or not) can lead people to believe that something is true and therefore make decisions based on that. Both disinformation and misinformation may perpetuate hate and harm if the false information targets a particular individual or group or sews division.

To counter false information:

- Try to find the original news story / media item being referred to and read it for yourself (this can be difficult when so many people disseminate clips or their own interpretations of what happened).
- Try to find two or three reputable sources reporting on the same issue to see if the information matches.
- Ask the person who shared it or created it to provide their information sources.
- Significant stories may have been covered by fact checking services
- Provide counter evidence in order to educate and promote the facts.
- Report false information to online moderators so that it can be removed.
- Petition platforms to be more diligent with their content and fact checking policies.
- Disengage or boycott platforms which actively promote disinformation.

The media shapes narratives and opinions

When a media outlet or platform is popular enough it has immense power to change norms, perspectives and even national political opinion. Imagine a scenario where…

- Members of the public are polled about their three biggest political concerns and name the economy, healthcare and access to housing.
- The media gradually run more stories about asylum seekers and immigrants.
- The media utilise dehumanising and demonising language – naming them illegal aliens and invaders.
- The media uses disinformation to exaggerate the number of immigrants entering a country or to associate immigrants with crimes committed by others.
- The media consistently connects other stories to this issue – you can't get a house because of immigrants, healthcare is overwhelmed by immigrants, the economy is bad because immigrants are taking your jobs.
- Members of the public absorb these messages and are happy to be interviewed saying they have concerns about immigrants.
- Another poll is conducted about citizens political concerns. They now name immigration, the economy and housing.

People are aware of the power that the media has to change opinions. Hate speech can be seen as a valuable tool for turning public opinion against a group and achieving a particular agenda. The media is especially good at knowing what makes a story engaging and easily spreadable – which is why it is useful for us to know these signs and be able to create positive stories.

What makes a spreadable story?

Messages are more likely to spread if they have 6 key ingredients as shown in the table below. The more of these ingredients a story or piece of content has, the more likely it is to spread. This is the case for positive content and hateful content. If you are going to create a positive narrative (to counter hate) then you can follow these steps to help you craft your message.

Ingredient	Example	Brainstorming your positive narrative
Make the key message simple and brief	Immigrants contribute positively	
Use unexpected or eye-catching words and images	Headline - "The refugee who saves lives" Photo of a doctor	
Use concrete detailed examples based on real life experiences	Tells the story of [name] who settled here and now works for [local hospital] in the emergency department	
Have the message come from credible sources the audience trusts	Publish the story in a trusted newspaper or TV station	
Make the message emotional	Get comments from patients who are grateful to be helped. Get comments from the doctor on how they love helping.	
Tell a story that is easy to remember and be retold	Beginning – refugee Middle – settling End – now working here and feeling part of community	

Hateful practices online

Online platforms are highly problematic for the spread of hate for a number of reasons:

- They allow large numbers of people to interact at scale
- Communications are quick and easy
- People have access for 24 hours a day
- Some online spaces allow anonymity, which can encourage people to engage in more harmful behaviours than usual
- Some online spaces have norms of unpleasant behaviour and algorithms that promote contentious content
- Laws and regulations around online spaces are slow to be updated to match trends

There are some harmful / hateful practices that happen online. Remember that not all harmful content or behaviours are classified as hate speech (does it incite violence?) but can still be hurtful and undermine social cohesion.

Trolling - Engaging in disruptive or malicious behaviour on social media platforms, posting hurtful or provocative comments, often with the intention of disrupting discussions or causing harm

Harassment - repeated attempts to send unwanted communications or contact in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear

Virtual mobbing - when a number of individuals coordinate to use social media or messaging to make hurtful comments to or about an individual. High volumes of messages may be harassment

Message bombing – flooding the targets phone or email with an overwhelming number of messages to disrupt their communication access

Hoax calls or messages – calling or messaging someone pretending to be someone else in order to mislead, scam, create fear or humiliation

Cyberstalking – Persistently following, monitoring, communicating with or harassing someone online. This may lead to in-person harm.

Doxing - publishing someone's sensitive personal information like home address, phone number or workplace without their consent. This encourages further harassment, stalking or identity theft

Online impersonation – creating hoax accounts, usually in the targets name, to post offensive or inflammatory content and discredit them

Countering hate online and in the media

The responses you choose need to be proportional to the hate or harm that was committed. This is a list of suggested responses for you to consider:

- **Fact check** – check sources and be sure you have all the information
- **Disseminate facts** – spread the factual information to combat mis and disinformation
- **Block users** – prevent harassing or hurtful users from being able to interact with you
- **Record** – if content seems harmful you can use screenshots or retain newspaper articles in case you wish to use it as evidence in reporting
- **Report** – this may be to a media regulator, online platform or even the police depending on the severity of the content
- **Do not share** – if information is false or hateful then reduce the reach of that message
- **Provide counter narratives** – deliberately post or share content which provides an alternative, more positive viewpoint for people to engage with
- **Explore their agenda** – research the motives of the person creating harmful content, consider their ideology, goals and any possible funding sources
- **Debate respectfully** – engage with the person creating / sharing the content to try and understand their viewpoint, needs and goals whilst also sharing your own. The Non Violent Communication framework can be useful here to help you remain respectful
- **Select your media** - choose online platforms which take online safety and moderation seriously. Choose media sources that report responsibly.
- **Support victims** - publicly or privately engage in conversation with the victims of harm so that they don't feel alone and ask them what support they need.

Look at the example media article on your table.

What aspects of this article are problematic? Who might it harm and how?

Responsible media outlets still need to be able to raise challenging issues and address public concerns. But they need to do it in ways which are based in facts, protect people's dignity and do not perpetuate harmful biases, stereotypes or precursors to violence.

How might you re-write about this topic in a more responsible way? **Can you remove biases and problematic language whilst still addressing the issue?**

Being an Active Bystander

Hate speech generally refers to content that incites unlawful acts against someone based on their characteristics.

A **hate crime** is when someone commits a hostile physical act against someone based upon their characteristics (or the perception of their characteristics). These acts include:

- Assault
- Burglary
- Criminal damage
- Fraud
- Hate mail
- Murder
- Sexual assault
- Theft

Hate incidents are behaviours which are not serious enough to be considered a hate crime but are still harmful to the victim and are motivated based on hostility and prejudge against the victims' characteristics. Examples include:

- Abusive gestures
- Bullying or intimidation
- Malicious complaints about the person
- Offensive leaflets/ posters
- Dumping of rubbish outside homes/ through letterboxes
- Threats of violence
- Verbal abuse (e.g. offensive jokes, name-calling)

One of the ways we can tackle bullying, harassment, microaggressions, hate speech or hate incidents is to become an active bystander.

Bystander - a person who is present at an event or incident but does not take part

Active bystander - someone who witnesses potentially harmful or inappropriate behaviour and then actively chooses to intervene and take action to stop it, prevent it from escalating, or support those affected

<u>Why don't good people help?</u>

There are many barriers to people being an active bystander when an incident takes place:

Failing to notice – if someone is distracted, in a busy space or immersed in a task then they may not actually witness the incident.

Personal safety – if an incident is serious then someone may choose not to intervene in order to physically protect themselves (which is fine). But there is still a question of whether they support the victim afterwards.

Evaluation apprehension – An individual's fear of how they will be publicly judged if they do intervene / get it wrong. This may include ridicule, damage to reputation or exclusion from a group.

Diffused responsibility – this is also known as the bystander effect. In experiments psychologists have noticed that the more people who witness a situation, the less likely individuals are to help. This is presumably because they believe someone else will do it – as shown in the below experiment:

Latané & Darley (1968)[38] asked participants to sit in a room and complete a questionnaire on the pressures of urban life. Smoke (actually steam) was piped into the room through a vent. The experimenters measured how many participants reported the smoke within a period of 6 minutes.

- 75% of participants reported when alone
- 38% of participants reported when two other participants were present
- 10% of participants reported when two actors were present and pretended to ignore the smoke in the room

Pluralistic ignorance – most people tend to rely on the overt reactions of others to guide their behaviour. If an individual believes that that everyone else is or wants to follow a particular course of behaviour then it is hard to go against that.
This is shown in Latané & Darley's experiment when people follow the lead of the actors ignoring the smoke.

Assuming a situation is not serious enough – some incidents may be very obviously serious and so motivate action. Others may be more subtle and so people may not think they need to get involved.

Ambiguity about the situation – if it is unclear what is actually happening or how the victim and perpetrator are connected then people may decide not the get involved.

Shotland and Straw (1976)[39] exposed 51 participants to a fake situation of violence between a man and a woman. In some incidents the woman screamed, 'I don't even know you,' while in the other she screamed, 'I don't even know why I married you.' People were three times more likely to intervene when they believed the couple to be strangers.

Lack of personal responsibility – if individuals are not directly involved and do not know either of the parties involved then they may believe it is not their responsibility to get involved.

Victim appearance – individuals may base their decision to help on what the victim looks like. Biases may be created based on whether the victim looks attractive, is wearing scruffy clothes, appears vulnerable, appears drunk and many other factors.

Being busy – individuals may 'want' to help from an ethical perspective but be rushing to another commitment and so not feel they have the time to intervene.

[38] Latané´, B., & Darley, J. M. (1968). Group inhibition of bystander intervention in emergencies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 10*, 215–221.
[39] Shotland, R. L., & Straw, M. K. (1976). Bystander response to an assault: When a man attacks a woman. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 34* (5), 990.

Darley & Bateson (1973)[40] asked 69 seminary students to deliver a sermon on the parable of The Good Samaritan – the lesson is all about helping those in need. The students were told their sermon would be in another building. Participants were given one of two messages:

- "Oh, you're late. They were expecting you a few minutes ago. You'd better get moving."
- "It'll be a few minutes before they're ready for you, but you might as well head on over."

On the way to the other building was an actor - a man slumped in a doorway with his eyes closed, coughing and moaning, clearly in distress. **10%** of the 'hurried' students stopped to help and **63%** of the 'unhurried' students stopped to help.

Latané & Darley (1970)[41] created a five-stage model of decision making to determine whether a bystander would be likely to help. Any of the barriers we have mentioned could prevent people progressing to the next stage.

1. notice that something is a problem
2. define that situation as an emergency (or serious)
3. assess how personally responsible they feel
4. decide how best to offer assistance
5. act on that decision

Which of these barriers would be most likely to discourage you from intervening in an incident?

Before being an active bystander remember the ABC approach:

- **Assess safety** – ask yourself it is safe for you to get involved. Be careful not to put yourself at risk.
- **Be in a group** – where possible see if others can help you or if you can help in public where you will be safer
- **Care for the victim** - Talk to the person who you think may need help. Ask them if they are OK

[40] Darley, J. M., & Batson, C. D. (1973). "From Jerusalem to Jericho": A study of situational and dispositional variables in helping behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *27*(1), 100.

[41] Latané´, B., & Darley, J. M. (1970). *The unresponsive bystander: Why doesn't he help?* New York, NY: Appleton-Century-Croft.

Intervene safely with the 5Ds

The organisation 'Hollaback' developed a framework of 5 D's[42] to help people remember different strategies for safely intervening when they saw an incident. You can utilise more than one strategy for the same incident.

Strategy	Explanation	Examples
Direct action	Calmly confront the perpetrator of harm by naming the inappropriate behaviour. Judge whether it is safe for both you and the victim if you do this. Your direct action should be short in order to avoid escalation.	Say: • That's inappropriate • That's racist / homophobic / sexist / disrespectful (though people may argue against this label) • Leave them alone • Please stop that • They want you to leave them alone
Distract	Interrupt the problematic incident in a creative way. Usually by engaging with the victim rather than the perpetrator. This allows you to intervene without making it obvious.	• Pretend to be lost and ask for directions • Pretend to know the victim and start small talk about a random topic • Get in the way of the victim and perpetrator (repack your bags, take your coat off) • Accidentally drop something near by to cause a distraction
Delegate	Look for someone else who is willing and able to help. This relies on you being clear about what the problem is and how you would like them to help. The person you ask may intervene **for** you or **with** you.	• In public environments you may fetch someone with authority like a shop supervisor, transport driver or school staff member • Ask the person next to you if they will talk to the victim whilst you stand in between the victim and perpetrator
Document	Record or take notes about the incident **IF**: • The victim is already being helped • Documenting does not affect your own safety Then ask the victim what *they* would like to do with your documentation. It is important that they decide.	• A perpetrator is verbally abusing someone on a bus. The person next to them is already chatting to the victim. You record the incident on your phone. Afterwards you show the victim and ask them if they want the documentation. • A perpetrator makes a hateful comment about someone before driving off. You make a note of their appearance and car licence number. You check if the victim is ok and then share information with them.
Delay	If it is not safe or possible to intervene as an incident happens, we can help the victim afterwards to reduce their experience of trauma.	• Ask the victim if they are ok and need anything • Reassure the victim that what happened was not ok and not their fault • Offer to accompany the victim for a while • Offer to help the victim report the incident if they want to

[42] Hollaback! (2017). *Bystander Intervention Resources: Hollaback! End Harassment. Hollaback! Together We Have the Power to End Harassment.* (Organisation rebranded to Right to Be) https://righttobe.org/guides/bystander-intervention-training/ Retrieved 05/05/25

The 5Ds framework can also be applied to online environments. People may feel more comfortable being an active bystander online because the personal threat to safety is lesser.

Strategy	Examples
Direct action	Challenge the person doing the harassment • Chime in with supportive, affirming or constructive comments • Expose fake accounts to raise awareness about abusive tactics being used • Challenge hate and harassment by labelling it as such and highlighting the unjust intent / effects • Fact check false claims to remove false narratives • Diffuse the situation with humour, educational materials or evidence • Publicly state what is and isn't ok to say / do online. It may not educate that person but creates norms for others
Distract	Deflect from the abuse through creative tactics to de-escalate the situation • amplify the original content to overshadow the abusive content • reply positively to the content • flood a hashtag or thread with positive unrelated content to dilute the hurtful content
Delegate	Find others to help. • bring in a community to uplift the victim • report the hate to the platform for them to handle • help the targeted person increase their online security • uplift and repost public statements of support and solidarity
Document	Gather evidence of the incident(s) • Take screenshots of harmful content • Save email chains and note the IP address • Many platforms have a 'download your information' feature that will allow you to save comments or messages directed to you • Offer to monitor some's account / mentions so that they don't have to monitor harmful content about themselves
Delay	Support the victim after the incident: • Affirm that it's not ok and it's not their fault • Offer to listen • Offer specific help • Send uplifting messages • Offer to help report the incident • help the victim increase their online security

Which of the 5Ds do you feel most comfortable using?

Any reflections from the active bystander role plays?

Home Group 3

Today we explored bias, microaggressions, hate speech and how to be an active bystander. Within each of these areas we can think about the role we play in countering those challenges.

You may like to record any reflections from your discussion (being mindful of confidentiality).

Psychological Safety

Psychological safety – the belief that the work environment is safe for interpersonal risk taking.

In every interaction, people do a risk calculation where they weigh up the benefits of speaking up vs the chances of personal detriment. If personal detriment is (or feels) high then people will stay silent to ensure short term safety.

Speaking up may include:

- Raising a point of view / idea
- Asking questions to clarify
- Asking for feedback
- Acknowledging risks / issues / concerns
- Admitting mistakes

Personal detriment may include:

- Looking ignorant or incompetent
- Being belittled / humiliated
- Being punished / berated
- Being silenced / ignored
- Others generally reacting badly to your sharing

In psychologically safe environments colleagues trust and respect each other and feel able (even obligated) to be candid. This means that ideas are shared supportively, mistakes are caught early and reported and organisations have a healthy culture of learning.

Psychological safety is NOT:

- **An easy life.** Always agreeing, being nice, consistent praise, ease.
- **The same as trust.** Trust happens between individual whereas psychological safety is about the whole group and is therefore varies between groups and is shaped by local leader's culture.
- **A personality factor.** It is not simply the case that extroverts will always speak up. Both introverts and extroverts require psychological safety to share in ways that work for them.
- **Low standards.** Some people believe that psychological safety means less accountability but this is not the case. When psychological safety is combined with high standards it leads to high levels of learning within an organisation.

	Low standards	**High standards**
High psychological safety	Comfort zone 😊	Learning zone 🤩
Low psychological safety	Apathy zone 😑	Anxiety zone 😖

- **Apathy zone** – People show up but are disengaged and do the minimum.
- **Comfort zone** – collegial mood but people are not challenged at work.
- **Anxiety zone** – Higher levels of errors. Workplace safety suffers. People hide mistakes for fear of retribution.
- **Learning zone** – High performance area where people get complex and innovative work done

The costs of low psychological safety

In her book, The Fearless Organisation, Amy Edmonson[43] outlines why organisations need **psychological safety** in order to give feedback and speak up about concerns. She explores case studies of organisations where people could not share their ideas or worries.

A lack of psychological safety led to businesses collapsing because they failed to innovate in line with the market or high staff turnover because employees sought to escape inappropriate behaviours. In extreme cases, suppressing feedback around errors and concerns can lead to disastrous results for individuals and organisations.

> In 2003, NASA's Columbia space shuttle disintegrated as it re-entered Earth's atmosphere and all 7 astronauts died. Investigations found that an engineer had concerns about the safety of the shuttle during tests but felt unable to speak up about these to managers because of a culture that 'engineers were not to send messages higher than their own rung in the ladder'. Fear of authority and hierarchical structures can suppress feedback channels.

In 1994, Betsy Lehman died whilst undergoing chemotherapy. It was a radical process where she would be given very high doses of treatment each day for four days. Investigations found that she had accidentally been given four times the dosage *every day* for the four days. She experienced extreme discomfort, pain and nausea and reported this to nurses. Betsy, her husband and the nurses all had concerns about how the treatment was going but this feedback was not expressed clearly or decisively and so Betsy's treatment continued. She died of heart failure.

> Edmondson also points to the #MeToo movement which highlights how a shockingly high number of sexual harassment, misconduct and abuse instances went unchallenged. This was because of a mixture of those affected feeling unable to speak up or, when they did, they were ignored, humiliated or their testimony silenced.

In psychologically unsafe environments people may fail to challenge hate and harm, or even participate in it in order to fit in and avoid humiliation and punishment.

Measuring psychological safety

Edmondson developed a psychological safety survey[44] which is shown on the next page. Each item is scored from 7 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree).

Individuals ***can*** complete the survey to measure their own levels of psychological safety at work. However, this tool is most effective when whole teams compile their results. This gives a good indication of the safety levels in the workplace as a whole.

---

[43] Edmondson, A. C. (2019). *The fearless organization: Creating psychological safety in the workplace for learning, innovation and growth*. John Wiley & Sons.
[44] Edmondson, A.C. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behaviour in work teams. *Administrative science quarterly, 44* (2), 350-383.

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. If you make a mistake on this team, it is often held against you							
2. Members of this team are able to bring up problems and tough issues							
3. People on this team sometimes reject others for being different.							
4. It is safe to take a risk on this team.							
5. It is difficult to ask other members of this team for help.							
6. No one in this team would deliberately act in a way that undermines my efforts							
7. Working with members of this team, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilised.							

You might like to try and answer these questions:

- For your workplace
- For this programme as a whole
- For your home group

Do you notice any differences in scores between different teams that you belong to?

Scoring the statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Reverse scoring	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
2.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Reverse scoring	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Reverse scoring	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
6.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Your total score:							

What helps you to feel psychologically safe to speak up?

How to increase psychological safety in teams and organisations

Simon Sinek[45] says that one of the roles of a leader is to create a circle of safety for everyone on the team. He notes that if people fear losing their job, being punished or other forms of negative consequences then they will not be capable of doing their best work.

Creating psychological safety is something that must be done by those in leadership positions – board members, managers and team leaders. This is because they have the most influence over the organisation's culture, processes and norms and so must be explicit in creating safety. Individuals may try to support each other, but ultimately setting a culture needs to be done from the top down. Learning to create psychologically safe cultures takes time and practice.

Amy Edmondson sets out a short checklist[46] to help leaders improve psychological safety in teams.

1. Setting the stage – help everyone to understand your context and get motivated.

1a) Frame the work – set expectations about the work, the likelihood of mistakes, failures, uncertainty and the importance of sharing feedback. This helps people brace themselves for challenges and be open to sharing when setbacks occur.

- Have I clarified the nature of the work?
- Are my team clear how much complexity and uncertainty they will face?
- How do I speak about failures or errors? Do I frame them as learning opportunities?
- Do I emphasise that it is not possible to get something brand new 'right first time'?

1b) Emphasise purpose – identify what is at stake, why it matters and for whom. When people understand the greater purpose or cause they are working towards they are more likely to be transparent with their ideas and challenges to serve the goal.

- Have I articulated clearly why our work matters, why it makes a difference and for whom?
- How often do I emphasise the purpose with my team throughout the process?

2. Inviting participation – Creating confidence that people are welcome to share anything.

2a) Situational humility – acknowledge gaps in your own learning and knowledge so that people feel comfortable sharing their own. This allows people to open up and challenge the leader.

- Have I made sure that people know that I don't think I have all of the answers?
- Have I emphasised that we can always learn more?
- Have I been clear that the situation we are in requires everyone to be humble and curious about what's going to happen next?

[45] Sinek, S. (2017). *Leaders eat last*. Portfolio Penguin.
[46] Edmondson, A. C. (2019). *The fearless organization: Creating psychological safety in the workplace for learning, innovation and growth*. John Wiley & Sons.

2b) Proactive inquiry – ask great questions to promote learning. Create a culture of coaching and feedback that helps people to build their reflective muscles and provides you with insights from the team.

- How often do I ask good questions rather than rhetorical ones?
- How often do I ask questions of others, rather than just expressing my perspective?
- Do I demonstrate an appropriate mix of questions that go broad and go deep?
- When I ask questions do I take the time to listen deeply to people's responses?

2c) Systems and structures – use formal and informal ways of getting team members to participate in giving feedback and sharing. Having a culture or norm of participation lowers the effort needed to share.

- Have I created structures to systematically elicit ideas and concerns?
- Are these structures well designed to ensure a safe environment for open dialogue?

3. Responding productively – When people do share, how are they and their comments treated?

3a) Express appreciation – regardless of the content, thank people for taking the time to express themselves. This reinforces the value of sharing.

- Have I listened thoughtfully, signalling that what I am hearing matters?
- Do I acknowledge or thank the speaker for bringing the idea or question to me?

3b) Destigmatize failure – avoid punishing or belittling failure and reframe failure as learning. This prevents people from hiding failures or fearing humiliation. It encourages people to be transparent.

- Have I done what I can to destigmatise failure?
- How do I help my team distinguish and respond to, simple / complex / intelligent failures?
- What more can I do to celebrate intelligent failures?
- When someone comes to me with bad news, how do I make sure it's a positive experience?
- Do I offer help or support to guide the next steps?

3c) Sanction clear violations – If individuals commit a 'blameworthy' failure (deliberately break rules or perform unacceptably in spite of feedback), how do we appropriately sanction them in order to reinforce the safety of the rules? Reinforcing the rules is important for team norms.

- Have I clarified the boundaries?
- Do people know what constitutes blameworthy acts in our organisation?
- Do I respond to clear violations in an appropriately tough manner so as to influence future behaviour?

The productive responses to failure depend on the type of failure that has occurred. Edmondson defines failure in general as "an outcome that deviates from the expected and desired results". However, she also goes further to define three different kinds of failure[47]

[47] Edmondson, A. C. (2023). *Right Kind of Wrong: The Science of Failing Well*. New York, NY: Atria Books

Failure type	Simple failures	Complex failures	Intelligent failures
Definition	Simple mistakes where you know how to do 'the thing' correctly but a single slip or causal factor results in a failure. These can still have dangerous consequences.	Multiple errors or challenges combine to create an undesirable outcome. These often happen in new or uncertain environments where lots of people and factors are involved.	To be intelligent the failure must be about trying something new, be driven by an opportunity, be informed by prior knowledge and risks were mitigated. Despite that, you didn't get the desired results. It is important to then learn from the failure.
Examples	• Losing your keys. • A motor accident after failing to check a mirror.	• A business failing after market changes and a challenge to cashflow. • A death because a number of different health professionals did not coordinate on risk factors, signs and symptoms	• Testing a new product line with part of an existing audience and finding it was not popular. • Inventing a new medicine and running a clinical trial to find it does not work.
Responses	• Training / retraining • Process improvement • System redesign • Sanctions (if repeated or blameworthy)	• Failure analysis from diverse perspectives • Identification of risk factors to address • System improvement • Better coordination between professionals	• Failure parties / awards to celebrate effort and process • Thoughtful analysis of results to figure out implications • Brainstorming new hypotheses • Design next steps or additional experiments

Which aspects of psychological safety would you most like to improve in your team or community? How would you do this?

Adaptive Leadership

"Adaptive Leadership is the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive."[48]
– Ronald Heifetz

Heifetz' theory of adaptive leadership focuses on the idea that leaders are most needed for the situations that involve change and adaptation. This is the case when people are experiencing new problems with unknown answers and usually lots of variables to negotiate. By starting from the challenging situation, we can draw out the skills and processes of effective leadership and learn to implement them better.

> The task of leaders facing adaptive challenges is to **"mobilize and sustain people through the period of risk that comes with adaptive change."**

One challenge of adaptive leadership is that it does not provide a concrete set of actions for individuals to follow – it cannot because each adaptive challenge will require a different response. However, it does provide a framework of things that leaders can bear in mind or address in order to navigate their own challenge.

Identify the adaptive challenge

Heifetz notes that there are different variables that make up a challenge:

- Whether the problem is clearly defined or unclear
- Whether the best expert (e.g. marketing director) or process (e.g. fire alarm procedure) are known or whether a new expert / procedure needs to be found or developed.
- Who does the work? – Can the expert solve it themselves? Does the leader? Or does it require multiple people to contribute?

These inputs help us to define when a challenge is adaptive… and so when adaptive leadership is needed:

Problem definition	Experts and best practices	Who does the work?	Solution
Clear	Known	Expert or authority	Technical
Clear	Unknown	Expert or authority with others involved in the problem	Mixed (technical and adaptive)
Unclear	Unknown	The people involved in the problem	Adaptive

[48] Heifetz, R. A., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009*). The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organisation and the world.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press

A **technical challenge** is often easy to address by identifying the problem, who can solve it and then implementing the solution. This may come with challenges of time or budget, but not an 'adaptive change'. For example, if you break an arm your doctor will apply a medical procedure to help it set.

A **mixed challenge** is easy to identify but may involve experts recommending solutions which then have to be implemented by individuals who have to change their behaviour, attitudes, lifestyle, or beliefs in order to address the issue. For example, if you are diagnosed as at risk of diabetes or a heart condition your doctor may recommend medications and lifestyle choices but it is ultimately up to the patient to learn to change their health habits.

An **adaptive challenge** often has an unclear problem because it has many different competing issues to address. It will also be a novel issue for the people facing it, meaning they have no previous experience of what to do and so need to develop a solution – usually involving learning, behaviour change, belief change and so on. For example, a family may have to consider the housing situation of a very elderly relative. There are multiple problems such as their preference of living circumstances, budget, independence, their safety and quality of life. Weighing up possible solutions (nursing home, visiting carers, live with family) and working out what is best for everyone involved will require a lot of adaptation.

A challenge can also be **highly adaptive** if people cannot even agree on what the problem is. For instance, in the global discussions about climate change some people recognise it as a complex problem, others deny it as a hoax and some even support it as a positive for their local weather. To move forward on a cohesive solution would require a lot of adaptation from these differing groups.

Whether a challenge is technical, mixed or adaptive depends on your perception of the circumstances:

Fire

- **Technical** – a small kitchen fire from toast. Put it out using your health and safety / fire procedures.
- **Mixed** – a fire from an electrical fault in equipment. Put it out using procedures but then make enquires about equipment maintenance, sourcing, whether team members are using the equipment safely and need training.
- **Adaptive** – a building fire results in a great number of casualties. Do this community need funding, mental health support? Do the authorities need to investigate safety? Was there a failing in policy or practice that led to the incident?

Hiring staff

- **Technical** – you are hiring for a role you that have used before. Use the existing interview process.
- **Mixed** – the hiring process may be technical but you want to support your existing team in welcoming the new staff member to the role, values and culture of the organisation.
- **Adaptive** – your organisation is struggling to recruit people of a particular age / race / gender / faith and want to improve your diversity. Why are these people not attracted to this role? Is your hiring process fair? Is your messaging / company image effective?

What challenge are you facing?
What aspects of the challenge are technical?
What aspects of the challenge are adaptive?

Two myths

Is there a difference between leadership and authority?

The Illusion of a broken system: "There is no such thing as a dysfunctional organization, because every organization is perfectly aligned to achieve the results it currently gets."[49]

People hate change: People don't fear change; they fear loss.

What is your adaptive challenge?	
Stakeholder group	**The loss they may face if the status quo changes**

[49] Heifetz, R. A., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009*). The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organisation and the world.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, page 17

Challenge archetypes

Heifetz identifies a number of common challenges that require adaptive leadership, and which can arise when people are resisting adaptive changes.

1. **A gap between espoused values and actual behaviour**
   An individual or organisation says they have a particular belief set, vision or way of working but then behaves in a contradictory manner. This may be seen in companies claiming their belief in equality but having board members from a narrow set of backgrounds.

2. **Competing commitments**
   The leader or group has to balance two contradictory courses of action. For example, a charity may receive money from donors who request their money be used in a certain way. This creates competition between the need for investment and the need for autonomy over spending.

3. **Speaking the unspeakable**
   In some teams, communities and families, certain topics may be considered taboo. Because they are not discussed the lack of knowledge / transparency leads to additional problems and those who try to address the issue may receive criticism. For example, a company may not want to address whether their CEO has peaked in their performance and may need replacing. A family may wish to avoid conversations on sexual health. These topics remain an 'elephant in the room' which is never addressed but still has influence over people.

4. **Work avoidance** – which can take many forms as shown in the table on this page and the next.

Avoidance Type	Overview	Example
Implementing a technical solution to an adaptive problem	People try to 'save time' by implementing a quick fix process instead of tackling the complex issue. This avoids work because the underlying problem is not addressed.	Staff have low productivity with their existing computer system because they lack confidence, training or there is cultural resistance. Instead of tackling this the company hires a consultant who recommends a 'better' computer system.
Resolving conflict prematurely	A conflict or disagreement is shut down before people get the chance to explore the issue.	In a meeting one person presents an idea. Someone else begins to air their concerns about the idea. Another team member interrupts and encourages people to be more positive and take the idea at face value.
Displacing responsibility for the problem to authority	Members of the group say that it is not this group's responsibility to address the problem or that there is no point trying to address it if people in higher positions are doing nothing.	A team project is not going well and the group identify that the vision is not clear. They decide that it is down to the board of directors to tackle the vision and that until they do, all the team can do is keep working on their own role as best they can.

Avoidance Type	Overview	Example
Marginalising the person who raised the issue	Taking focus off of the challenge by attacking the person who highlighted it. This avoids work by making out like there is no problem – just one person with concerns.	A woman in a team of men questions whether their next marketing campaign contains a gender bias. She is ridiculed for trying to make everything 'woke' and trying to put her stamp on everything. Because she is the only one with the problem the team dismiss the concern.
Taking options off the table to 'honour' old behaviours	During idea generation groups may rule out anything new in order to avoid the work of change.	A team is planning a networking event for their clients. One person suggests a virtual event for convenience. Other team members say that their events have always been in person, that's what clients expect – it's too out of line with our values to be online.
Externalising the problem	Group members blame outside circumstances or people and focus on the cause of the problem instead of addressing it.	A team has noticed that their sales figures have been low because of the economic after effects of Covid. Rather than working on ways to change their sales process the group spends time complaining about how the pandemic has damaged business.
Attacking an authority	Blaming someone higher or outside of the issue. Work is avoided by focusing on the faults of the authority figure.	A team has noticed that their sales figures have been low. They agree that the CEO has not provided them with enough training on sales / market changes / new products and spend time complaining about their leadership.
Creating committees	Appointing a committee to investigate an issue, generate ideas and implement a solution delegates responsibility for the challenge. This may also avoid work because the recommendations are frequently ignored.	A company is accused of having a racial bias problem. The group appoints a diversity committee to investigate the issue so that it is not discussed in 'main meetings' where it may cause discomfort or challenging conversations. After months the committee finds two areas of concern and emails recommendations to everyone – which are not implemented.

What challenge archetypes are you / your group facing?

Countering Harm and Hate

This table contains a summary of the factors which can increase the chance of harm and hate occurring – as well as some of the things we need to do to counter these factors. Remember that we can counter each of these:

- **At an internal level** – by being aware of our own biases, perspectives and contributions to harm and working to change these
- **At an interpersonal level** – by being aware of instances of harm between people and positively intervening, challenging and educating
- **At an organisational level** – by being aware of institutional and structural harms and working with others to change systems and processes
- **At a community / societal level** – by being aware of toxic leadership, harmful narratives, propaganda and scapegoating of particular groups. We can work together in large groups to present positive narratives, provide ethical leadership and humanise others.

Factor	Description	Countering hate and harm
Agentic state / diffused responsibility	carrying out the orders of another (usually an authority) and so not feeling personally responsible for their actions.	• Question authority (diplomatically and justly) • Take personal responsibility – can I be at peace with my decision? What would people think of me? • Clarify who you are accountable to • Evaluate decisions based on your personal ethics and values
Belief perseverance	maintaining a belief despite new information that contradicts it. (Like believing a leader's intentions or actions are good)	• Compare the situation now to the situation at the beginning to see what has changed • Be aware of the emotional discomfort of changing your mind • Get the perspective of someone with no previous experience / history of the situation
Bias	a prejudice against or preference towards something which is usually considered unfair.	• Be aware that biases exist and which ones may affect you • Commit to watching yourself and see if you can bring awareness to your biases • Work on expanding your empathy to people unlike you • Take a purposeful pause: biases live in the quick-thinking part of your brain • Take action to put right biases that have already occurred – apologise, change policies, education • When hiring, remove unnecessary information (e.g. CV's without names) • Decide on criteria for decision-making before making decisions • Use groups to make decisions • Use checklists to ensure you are using previously agreed upon criteria, also forces decision-making to be slower

Factor	Description	Countering hate and harm
Boredom	an emotional state where someone is disinterested in activities or their surroundings, feels they have nothing to do and is not occupied.	• Find meaningful activities which promote good rather than causing harm • Create systems / societies where people have hobbies, social connections and meaningful work to engage in
Classification	Groups of people are categorised into 'us and them' by ethnicity, race, religion or nationality.	• Create universal institutions that foster social cohesion. • Encourage mixing of people from different backgrounds to promote tolerance and cohesion. • Resist / protest against pressures to classify people in unnecessary or potentially harmful ways • Promote narratives focused on commonalities rather than classifications
Conformity (to peers)	the tendency to align behaviour, attitudes and beliefs with those of the wider group, usually in order to fit in or gain approval.	• Evaluate decisions and behaviours based on your personal ethics and values rather than group behaviours • Evaluate how important it is for these peers to like you and where this need comes from. • Consider whether a different peer group would be a better fit for your current ethics and values • Before joining in with a behaviour or action, ask what your future self would think of this behaviour.
Conformity (to a social role)	an individual adapts the behaviour to match the expectations and norms associated with a particular role that they are occupying.	• Challenge yourself to evaluate the role you are playing – what behaviours are actually expected of this role and what could be biases and assumptions. • Critically assess whether the current norms of a role are ethical / valid or whether you can break the status quo by doing things more positively. • Before joining in with a behaviour or action, ask what your future self would think of this behaviour. • Organisations have a responsibility to train and induct people into roles with ethical standards and norms in mind • Society can challenge organisations and roles that have created harmful norms and help them to create new ones
Contractual obligation	a verbal or written agreement that someone will do something.	• Do not agree to a commitment or behaviour that is ambiguous or not fully defined • If new information is revealed that makes you uncomfortable then you have the right to nullify the agreement (if it was not originally clear) • Seek legal action if an agreement obligates you to be involved in harmful behaviour

Factor	Description	Countering hate and harm
Dehumanisation	when a person or group is deprived of their positive human qualities and made to seem less than human. This can be done through language (comparing to animals, verbal abuse), symbols and propaganda or through physical treatment (refusing human interaction, treatment like animals). Normal behaviours can be suspended if you view the other as an object rather than as a person. Dehumanisation is frequently used in prejudice, racism and discrimination.	• Humanise people – use their names, tell their individual stories, give them a platform to express themselves • Question / challenge individuals and organisations who use dehumanising language. Educate them on its impact. • Report incidents of dehumanising language to online platforms, media regulators and organisations where appropriate • Have meaningful conversations with people who are generally dehumanised to foster human connection • Challenge or boycott organisations and leaders who repeatedly dehumanise others
Deindividuation	when individuals in a group lose their individual sense of identity and responsibility. They become anonymous in the group or crowd. This can increase the chance of people committing harm because they are anonymous or being the recipient of harm because people do not see them as individuals.	• Individuate people – avoid treating people as homogenous groups. Instead learn the stories, opinions and context of individuals within the group. • Identify people by name. • Be wary of spaces where people can remain anonymous. Only use anonymity where it is required for safeguarding reasons. Otherwise ensure people are identifiable. • Organisations need to find a balance between personal privacy and identifiability
Demonisation	portraying something or someone as wicked and dangerous.	• Humanise people – use their names, tell their individual stories, give them a platform to express themselves • Question / challenge individuals and organisations who use demonising language. Educate them on its impact. • Personally use more accurate / positive / uplifting language. • Report incidents of demonising language to online platforms, media regulators and organisations where appropriate • Have meaningful conversations with people who are generally demonised to foster human connection • Challenge or boycott organisations and leaders who repeatedly demonise others

Factor	Description	Countering hate and harm
Discrimination	Unfair treatment of one person or a group of people because of their identity (e.g., race, religion, gender ability, culture, etc.) A dominant group may use laws, customs and powers to deny the rights of others.	• Evaluate personal decision making to check for discrimination. Would I make the same decision if this person was… (black, a woman, Sikh etc). • Challenge instances of discriminatory behaviour – name the more productive or fair alternatives • Report instances of discrimination to organisations and / or legal practitioners • Organisations can develop and enforce anti-discrimination policies • Provide training on bias and discrimination • Individuals and groups can provide support for and advocacy for those who have been discriminated against • Pass and enforce laws prohibiting discrimination. • Ensure full citizenship and voting rights for all groups. • Give all individuals the right to sue the state, corporations and other individuals if their rights are violated. • Governments can run, fund or support human rights organisations
For the greater good / moral justification	carrying out a 'bad' action because you believe it serves an important cause.	• Evaluate the behaviour or action against your own ethical standards and values • Before joining in with a behaviour or action, ask what your future self would think of this behaviour • Find alternative ways to achieve your cause • Challenge organisations and leaders who are advocating harmful acts to achieve their goals • Question whether the harmful actions are actually the intention – is the cause simply an excuse for harm?
Groupthink	where a group of people makes poor decisions because they favour group harmony and conformity over critical analysis of the situation or options. In groupthink people may not consider many options, only use selective information, withhold criticism, quiet dissent and pressure others to join.	• Actively seek diverse perspectives • Play 'devils advocate' and role play differing points of view • Create psychological safety so that diverse voices can share their views in a group • Encourage people to question, debate and dissent • Develop a number of alternative ideas and suggestions • Use scoring criteria to evaluate decisions • Use an external perspective to gain feedback

Factor	Description	Countering hate and harm
Hate crime	A criminal act directed at a person or group because of the victim's real or perceived race, ethnicity, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or ability.	• Be an active bystander – interrupt or prevent hate crimes or support victims after a hate crime occurs • Prevent the precursors to hate crime (hate speech, discrimination, bias, dehumanisation). • Have and enforce laws prohibiting hate crimes • Ensure easy systems for reporting, investigating and prosecuting hate crimes. • Promote social cohesion and tolerance at all levels of society
Hate speech	any kind of communication in speech, writing or behaviour, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factor	• Be an active bystander – interrupt or prevent hate speech or support victims after a hate speech occurs • Prevent the precursors to hate speech (discrimination, bias, dehumanisation). • Have and enforce laws defining and prohibiting hate speech • Ensure easy systems for reporting, investigating and prosecuting hate speech which incites violence • Promote social cohesion and tolerance at all levels of society Where hate speech does not incite violence but does still cause harm: • Consider prohibiting or restricting the speech to reduce harm whilst balancing freedom of expression • Report to relevant organisational, media or civic leadership to engage them in action • Challenge the hateful expression using counter narratives. This tries to change the perspective of the speaker. (If so, remember your conflict resolution principles and to use Non Violent Communication). • Spread positive new perspectives on the targets of the hate message. This tries to change the perspective of the audience. • Initiate legal action against the people engaging in hate speech using civil, administrative or even criminal law.
Incremental transgressions	when 'bad' acts are committed gradually people are more likely to commit them compared to being asked to do something very harmful straight away.	• Treat even small harmful acts as unacceptable to avoid further transgressions. • Check in / evaluate each decision on its own merits rather than by comparison to what has been done before. • Evaluate behaviours and decisions against your own ethics and values. • Question others who ask you to gradually transgress

Factor	Description	Countering hate and harm
In-group – out-group dynamics	the tendency for individuals to categorise themselves and others into groups, leading to preferential treatment and biases towards members of one's own group (in-group) and often negative attitudes towards those in other groups (out-group).	• Critically question the 'in groups' that you belong to and therefore who you may be at risk of excluding or avoiding • Critically question your own biases • Actively try to empathise with the perspectives and lived experiences of out group members • Deliberately socialise and engage with others who are different to you • Avoid communicating about others as part of a generalised homogenous group – treat them as individuals • Identify shared values or goals shared with people from out groups • Organisations can deliberately facilitate the mixing of people from different groups • Organisations and society can investigate any root causes of in-group out-group dynamics to address particular barriers
Lack of accountability	when there are no checks on behaviour or consequences for transgressions people may continue to harm others or increase the severity of harm.	• Create personal accountability by reporting to others, seeking a line manager or mentor or using personal reflection • Establish clear expectations - define roles, responsibilities, limits, goals and standards • Individuals and organisations can establish regular feedback channels • Organisations can develop performance and standards tracking processes • Create clear procedures for non-compliance with any accountability standards • Society can create laws around national accountability (e.g. for human rights, criminal proceedings, discrimination)
Manufactured crisis	when actors use language to imply there is an emergency. This is usually to bypass the normal mechanisms of decision making, checks and balances. This means that harmful actions may receive less scrutiny.	• Critically question whether it is a real or manufactured crisis • Lobby leaders, bureaucrats and media to challenge the narrative and focus on the facts of the situation • Organisations and political agencies should still maintain checks and balances even in emergencies to prevent harmful acts or accumulation of powers • Do not follow or support actors who perpetuate emergencies for their own means • Find and expose stories of the 'other' in order to provide a counter narrative

Factor	Description	Countering hate and harm
Meaningful role	giving someone a role to play or a purpose to follow can help to motivate them, especially if that role is positively perceived.	• Critically question the impact and consequences of the meaningful role you have been asked to play • Consider whether there are more ethical ways you can achieve the same sense of meaning • Check in / evaluate each decision on its own merits rather than its connection to a meaningful role • Evaluate behaviours and decisions against your own ethics and values. • Challenge organisations and leaders who are advocating harmful acts to achieve their goals
Obedience to authority	a tendency to follow the orders of or try to please people in positions of perceived legitimate power	• Question authority (diplomatically and justly) • Critically assess whether the other person hold legitimate power • Recognise that even if an authority asks you to do something, you are ultimately responsible for your own ethical choices • Look for others who are also concerned about the authority figure's requests – disobey or question together • Critically assess what you are being asked to do by your own ethical standards • Evaluate how you would feel about the request if you were asked by a stranger • Report or expose authority figures who request or order harmful behaviours
Prejudice	Judging or forming an idea about someone or a group of people before you actually know them. Prejudice is often directed toward people in a certain identity group (e.g., race, religion, gender, etc.)	• Recognise that it is human nature for all of us to have some level of prejudice – but that we can gradually counter them and ensure we do act harmfully upon them • Explore and acknowledge your own prejudices • Challenge prejudiced assumptions and beliefs you hold about people and groups • Actively have meaningful conversations with people you might have judged in order to understand their perspective • Focus on shared goals and values • Address micro aggressions as an active bystander • Challenge acts of prejudice using education and / or counter narratives. This tries to change the perspective of the speaker. (If so, remember your conflict resolution principles and to use Non Violent Communication). • Recognise and challenge power systems, organisations or leaders that foster / maintain prejudice

Factor	Description	Countering hate and harm
Propaganda and disinformation	information (or disinformation) of a biased or misleading nature that is used to promote a political cause or point of view.	• Critically assess the narratives being presented • Fact check false or misleading claims – correct them, report them or share the facts yourself • Identify the purpose and source of the messages in order to evaluate the possible agenda • Challenge / remove harmful propaganda where you are able to (or report it to someone who can remove it) • Do not share propaganda messages • Provide a positive counter narrative • Address the underlying issues that make individuals vulnerable to propaganda • Critically consider where the line is between propaganda and freedom of expression • Have regulations for all forms of media and social media which allow the investigation and restriction of propaganda deemed harmful
Rationalising harm to reduce cognitive dissonance	cognitive dissonance is the psychological discomfort someone feels when they hold conflicting values, beliefs, attitudes or behaviour. People can reduce this discomfort by either changing their behaviours to be in alignment with their beliefs or changing their beliefs to be in line with their behaviour.	• Encourage people to clarify their beliefs and values • Coach people to explain what behaviours would best match their beliefs and values in order to encourage more positive behaviour • Support people to critically assess the information they have used to rationalise harm
Scapegoating	Blaming a person or group for something, when the fault actually lies elsewhere. Scapegoating includes hostile words or actions that can lead to verbal or physical violence; a person or group is blamed for something because of some aspect of their identity, but they usually lack the power or opportunity to fight back.	• Critically evaluate the narrative being presented about people or groups • Recognise biases or agendas which may lead to unfair blame • Explore the actual root causes of problems and communicate those widely to create a counter narrative • Challenge hostility towards people and groups – even if they are involved in a problem, use respectful dialogue • Be sceptical of organisations and leaders who regularly point to ‘easy solutions’ which involve scapegoating

Factor	Description	Countering hate and harm
Stereotype	The false idea that all members of a group are the same and think and behave in the same way.	• Recognise that it is human nature for all of us to have some stereotypes – but that we can gradually counter them and ensure we do act harmfully upon them • Explore and acknowledge any stereotypes you hold • Challenge stereotypes you hold about people and groups • Actively have meaningful conversations with people you might have formed a stereotype about in order to understand their perspective • Find or imagine someone from the stereotyped group who does not fit that stereotype • Treat each person as an individual rather than as a member of the stereotyped group • Circulate stories of individuals who challenges the traditionally held stereotypes about that group • Challenge people or organisations who communicate about others in a stereotyped way – help them to see another perspective or change their messaging
Symbolisation	Giving names or symbols to members of the 'other group' in order to easily identify them by ethnicity, race, religion or nationality. This may include colours, dress or labels.	• Resist any instructions which constitute giving symbols to members of a target group. • Find ways to reclaim symbols or deny their importance • Gain public support for the outlaw of these symbols • Legally forbid symbols of hate, group markings, gang clothing or tribal scarring
System power	when people are authorised or have institutionalised permission to behave in certain ways or to forbid and punish certain actions of others. The system provides a higher level of authority than the usual rules and norms.	• Investigate who made the system, who stands to benefit and who has responsibility for its consequences • Compare the behaviours and actions you 'have permission' for to your own ethical standards and values • Challenge or report systems which give permission for harmful behaviours • Work with others to create new norms of positive behaviour within the system

Factor	Description	Countering hate and harm
Unclear exit	not knowing how to end a social situation which makes you uncomfortable.	• Exit in a way that works for you – rather than looking for permission or the official way to do so • Tell the other that you feel uncomfortable and would like to stop / exit – ask them how • Check situations in advance – if I changed my mind how would I exit the situation?
Victim blaming	shifting the focus away from the perpetrator of harm by creating a narrative that the victim somehow instigated the harm or was deserving of harm.	• Focus on the choices and behaviours of the perpetrator • Tell the story of the victim in a blame free way, emphasising that what happened to them was unacceptable • Allow victims to tell their own story of what happened to them (what was done to them by the perpetrator) • Challenge victim blaming statements when you hear them • Hold perpetrators accountable for their choices regardless of the victims circumstances

Countering Harm and Hate - Generally protective factors

- Remember that we are all capable of harm and hate and so we need to consciously work on our personal ethics, values and choices.
- Seek the opinions of people you trust to help you weigh up difficult decisions or ethical dilemmas
- Be a good dissenter – you can be generally questioning about topic areas outside of your knowledge and expertise. You can be persistently challenging on topics for which you do have expertise.
- Connect with others on a human level.
- Deliberately mix with people from diverse backgrounds.
- Challenge or oppose leaders and organisations who operate with harmful tactics
- Use the power of story telling to share positive stories of others and what is possible
- Regularly commit small acts of kindness to spread positivity and cohesion
- Promote role models who are socially responsible, ethical and bring people together in positive ways
- Give people positive labels that they can strive to live up to (generous, thoughtful, kind)
- Admit when you make mistakes
- Always take personal responsibility for your own actions
- Respect just authority but challenge unjust authority
- Work with others to create larger scale positive changes – there is strength in working together
- Be a critical thinker – evaluate your feelings, thoughts, biases, judgements and assumptions so that you can challenge and change them where appropriate
- Celebrate the positives that come from diversity
- Be an active bystander – safely intervene in situations to support victims and educate / discourage perpetrators
- Tackle the circumstances that can sew hate – inequality, poverty, pain, unmet needs
- Structure communities so that there are opportunities to mix meaningfully with diverse groups of people
- Build organisations and projects that bring diverse groups together to work towards positive shared goals

Public Narrative

Public narrative[50] is a leadership tool developed by Marshall Ganz. He says that leadership is:

"Accepting responsibility for enabling others to achieve shared purposes under conditions of uncertainty"

He explains that a key problem in leadership is when leaders focus heavily on strategy, facts and trying to engage peoples thinking. This is important – but it does not motivate people to engage emotionally and therefore take action to join a movement. Public narrative is a storytelling framework that helps leaders to connect with their audience and bring about social change.

A public narrative contains three core strands:
The story of now – the urgent issue or challenge being faced that you want to tackle
The story of us – the shared values we hold that unite us
The story of self – the challenges, choices and values that led you to take on this cause

In module 4 we will look in more detail about how to craft a public narrative. For now, we are going to focus on the story of self so that you can prepare between modules three and four.

The story of self

Some people may feel uncomfortable about telling their own story and so avoid it. But if you don't take responsibility for authoring your own story, then others might.
Some people feel the need to present a 'best version' of themselves. Branding is about putting a gloss on your outside appearance. Telling a real story of self is about bringing out the authentic inner glow that you have.

All good stories need:
A character – you are the protagonist of your story
A plot – interruptions in what is expected or problems your character faces
A moral – experiential lessons about how you handled choices and what outcomes they led to

All stories are made of up of key 'moments'. You don't have to tell every part of your life story, only the moments which add value to the listener because they demonstrate:

- a key influence on your life
- a choice or dilemma
- change, learning or transition
- an outcome of a choice
- hope – showing what is possible
- resources you could draw upon
- moments of vulnerability (we like flawed and vulnerable characters more than perfect ones)

[50] Ganz, M. (2010). Leading change. Leadership, organization and social movements. In N. Nohria, R. Khurana, & N. Anand (Eds.), *Handbook of leadership theory and practice* (19, pp. 1-10). Harvard Business School Press.

Listen to the example story of self. Notice what 'moments' you hear in the story.

Key influences	Outcomes of choices
Choices or dilemmas	**Hope – moments of possibility**
Changes, learning or transition	**Resources the speaker drew upon**
Moments of vulnerability	**Anything else?**

Your story of self

In module 4 you will craft a public narrative speech. We will learn tools to support public speaking, confidence as well as crafting the story of self, us and now.

In between module 3 and 4 please draft the 'story of self' part of the speech. It does not need to be finished or well crafted. These questions may help you

What are they key moments in your life that:

- Led you to being on this programme?
- Called you to want to be a leader?
- Influenced your values?
- Presented you with a difficult choice or dilemma?
- Showed you who you are as a person?
- Help you to maintain hope about the future?
- Helped you to change or learn something significant?
- Show you are a real person with vulnerabilities?

Possible techniques for planning

- Create a timeline of your life and write on key moments in chronological order
- Use a table in a word processor with the headings; age, moment, what it shows
- Use sticky notes to brainstorm moments in any order they come to you, then sort into themes or categories
- Work with a friend or family member to brainstorm moments. Get them to ask you open questions about your life and what is important to you.

When you return to module 4 you will be asked to share a short story of self (1-3mins) which we will continue to develop. So please make sure that you have prepared.

Home Group 4

Today we looked at building psychological safety in organisations, using adaptive leadership to understand a complex challenge and some further ideas for countering hate and harm.

- What are the most important things you learned on this module?
- What will you try to do differently in your work / personal life? – How?

You may like to record any reflections from your discussion (being mindful of confidentiality).