

# Trauma Glasses On or Off?: A Trauma-Informed Approach to Challenging Implicit Bias



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Elizabeth Goncy, PhD, Cleveland State University Professor



# PSYCHOLOGY AND LAW



## Prison Yoga Project Northern Ohio Juvenile Program

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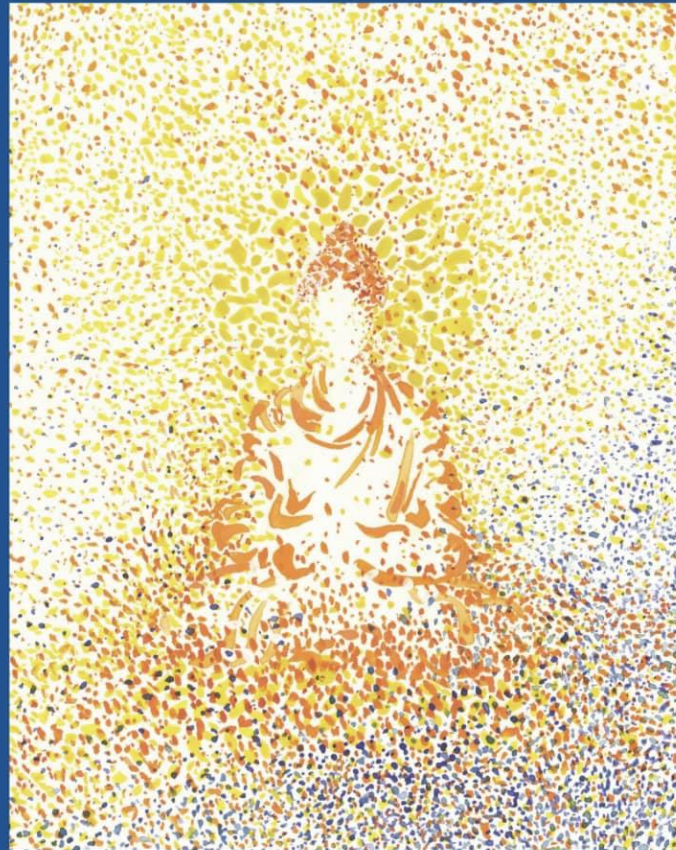
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# IJYT

No. 26 (2016)

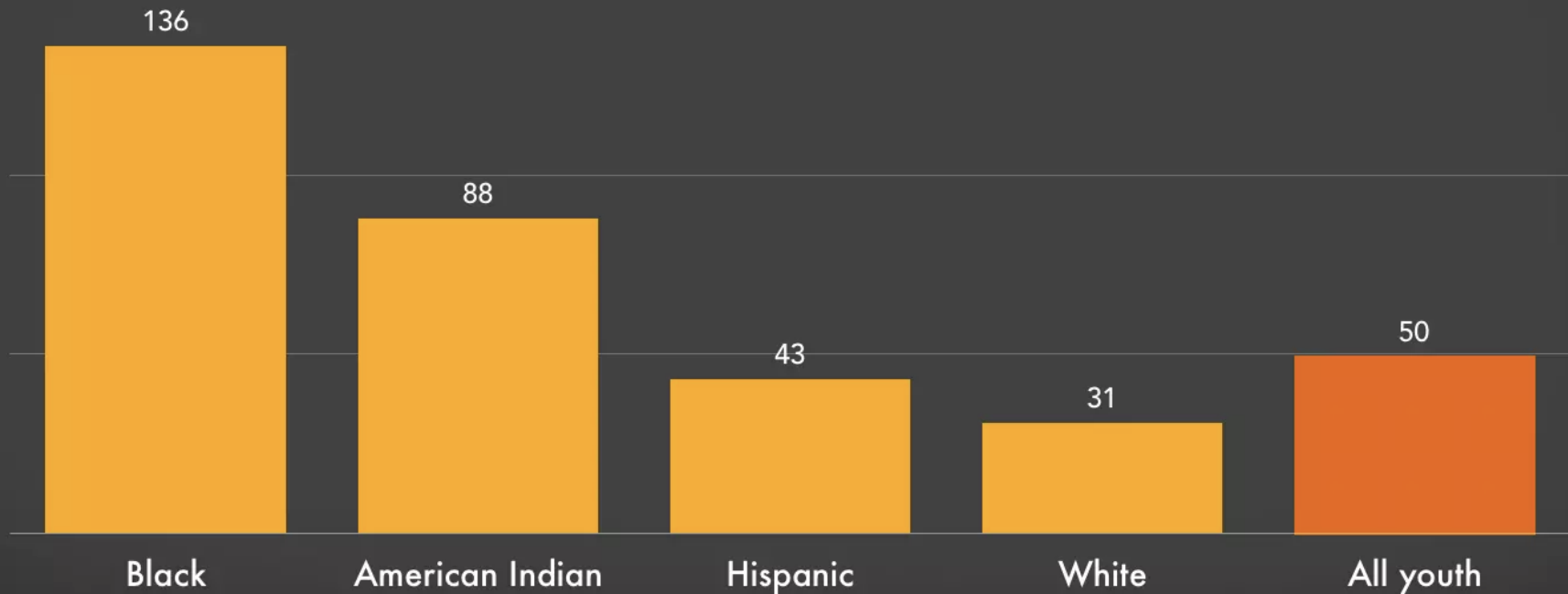
International Journal of YogaTherapy



Journal of  
The International Association  
of Yoga Therapists

# The juvenile justice system confines Black youth at over 4 times the rate of white youth

Number of youth ages 20 or younger, per 100,000 youth, in juvenile residential placement facilities in 2017



# Racial Disparities in the Juvenile Justice System

Decision Point	BLACK YOUTH	WHITE YOUTH
Arrests per 100,000 youth (2020)	2,487	1,080

Sources: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2023). *Estimated number of juvenile arrests*; Puzzanchera, C., Sladky, A., & Kang, W. (2023). *Easy access to juvenile court statistics: 1985-2021*.



# RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

Starting at birth, we interact with many systems and structures. Racism shows up in these systems in ways that reduce life expectancy and quality of life.



## BIRTH

- PLANNING
- DELIVERY
- PRENATAL CARE



## EARLY CHILDHOOD

- CHILDCARE
- EXPOSURE
- NUTRITION

## TRANSIT

- ACCESS
- SAFETY
- AFFORDABILITY



## SCHOOL

- QUALITY
- FUNDING
- DISCIPLINE



## NEIGHBORHOOD

- SAFETY
- AMENITIES
- EXPERIENCE



## JUSTICE

- FAIRNESS
- ACCESS
- OUTCOMES



## HOUSING

- STABILITY
- LOCATION
- AFFORDABILITY



## JOBS

- PAY
- SAFETY
- BENEFITS



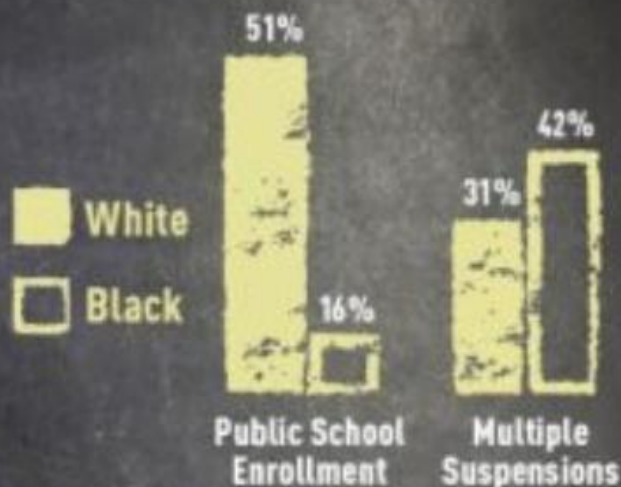
PUBLIC HEALTH  
ADVOCATES



# SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

School disciplinary policies disproportionately affect Black students.

Zero-tolerance discipline has resulted in Black students facing disproportionately harsher punishment than white students in public schools.<sup>1</sup>



Black students represent



# 31%

of school-related arrests<sup>2</sup>



Black students are  
suspended and expelled

3x

more than  
white students.<sup>3</sup>



Students suspended or expelled for a discretionary violation are nearly three times more likely to be in contact with the juvenile justice system the following year.<sup>4</sup>



BROWN AT 60: STILL SEPARATE. STILL UNEQUAL.



3. Data Snapshot: <http://data.ed.gov/DataStory/CNED-School-Discipline-Snapshot.pdf>

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

# #FOSTERCAREMONTH



YOUTH PLACED IN  
GROUP HOMES ARE  
**2.5 x more likely**  
TO GET INVOLVED  
IN THE JUSTICE  
SYSTEM

**90%**



OF YOUTH  
WITH 5+  
FOSTER  
PLACEMENTS  
WILL ENTER  
THE JUSTICE  
SYSTEM

Sources: <https://experts.umn.edu/en/publications/juvenile-delinquency-in-child-welfare-investigating-group-home-ef>  
<https://constitutionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/399.pdf>

30%

OF FOSTER YOUTH  
ENTER THE JUVENILE  
JUSTICE SYSTEM  
DUE TO THEIR  
BEHAVIOR IN AND  
OUT OF SCHOOL



COMPLEX NEEDS ARE BEING  
UNMET AND LABELED AS  
'BAD BEHAVIOR'

**ZERO TOLERANCE**  
POLICIES ARE PUSHING  
KIDS OUT OF SCHOOL  
INSTEAD OF  
SUPPORTING THEM  
AND LEADING THEM TO  
SUCCESS IN SCHOOL



50%



OF FOSTER YOUTH ARE  
BLACK OR LATINO



40% OF STUDENTS  
EXPELLED ARE  
BLACK

70% OF  
STUDENTS  
UNDER SCHOOL  
ARREST ARE  
BLACK OR  
LATINO

The prevalence of mental illness among youth in juvenile justice settings is much higher than in the general population.



**2 in 10** youth ages 13–18 in the general population have a mental illness.



**7 in 10** youth in juvenile justice have a mental illness.





# CHILDREN

## 50%



Of all mental illnesses begin by age 14.\*

### 1 in 5



Children\*\* (age 0-11) experience a mental disorder in a given year

### 10%



Of children experience some impairment in daily functioning at home, in school or in the community due to mental health problems\*\*\*

\*National Institute for Mental Health

\*\*Federal Register

### 70%

Of youth in the juvenile justice system suffer from mental health disorders.\*\*\*\*



### 27%

Of these youth experience disorders so severe that their ability to function is significantly impaired.\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*US Department of Health & Human Services

\*\*\*\*National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice



“We have to get the juvenile justice system good enough so that it is good enough for my kids, my grandkids, and anybody else’s kids.

We can’t justify sending a kid away only to have them come back worse off.

How can we justify doing something like that? It doesn’t make any of us safer when that happens by multiples.”



**ROBERT LISTENBEE**

First Assistant District  
Attorney

# ADVANCING RACIAL EQUITY IN PENNSYLVANIA'S YOUTH LEGAL SYSTEM

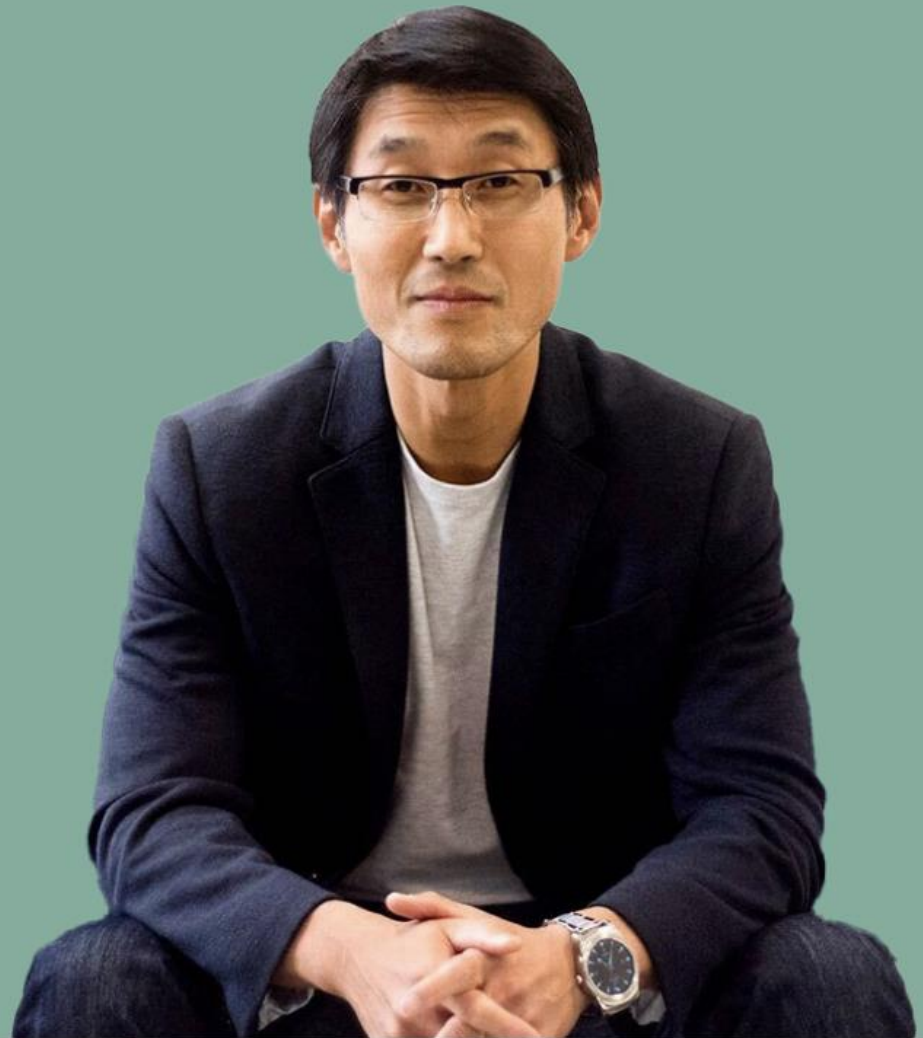
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AUGUST 2023



## **Professor Jerry Kang**

- Professor, UCLA School of Law
- Founding Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at UCLA
- Member of the National Council on the Humanities





# AUTOMATIC PROCESSING

#professional

#FEMALE

#ASIAN



#MIDDLE-  
AGED

# #ASIAN

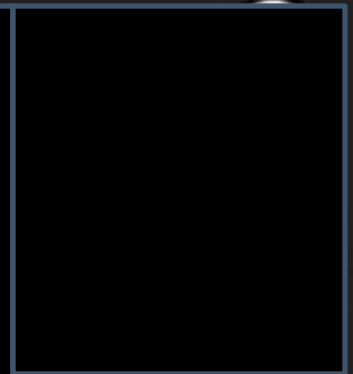
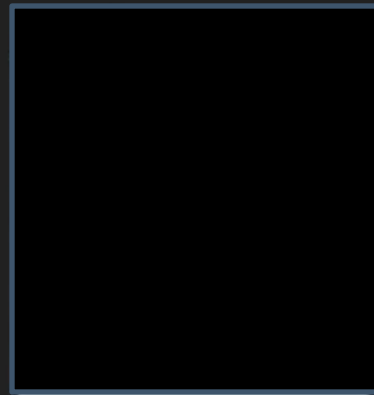


# #ASIAN

attitude:



stereotype:



An iceberg diagram illustrating explicit bias. The visible tip of the iceberg is light blue and labeled 'LINE OF CONSCIOUSNESS'. The submerged part is a large, solid blue rectangle. A vertical line marks the surface of the water.

## Explicit Bias

Attitudes and beliefs that we have about a person or group on a conscious level. We are fully aware of these, so they can be self-reported.



# STROOP TASK

Time Yourself

#1	#2	#3
SLB	CFLTK	CFLTK
SPRND	HLMG	CFLTK
SLB	SPRND	SLB
SPRND	HLMG	CFLTK

#1

#2

#3

**GREEN**

**BLUE**

**GREEN**

**RED**

**YELLOW**

**YELLOW**

**PURPLE**

**BLUE**

**RED**

**GREEN**

**RED**

**PURPLE**

#1

#2

#3

RED

GREEN

YELLOW

BLUE

GREEN

BROWN

RED

YELLOW

BLUE

BROWN

BROWN

BLUE

# Implicit Association Test

A.G. Greenwald + M.R. Banaji



**LEFT**

**RIGHT**



cheerful  
glorious  
happy  
triumph

horrible  
tragic  
hurtful  
angry

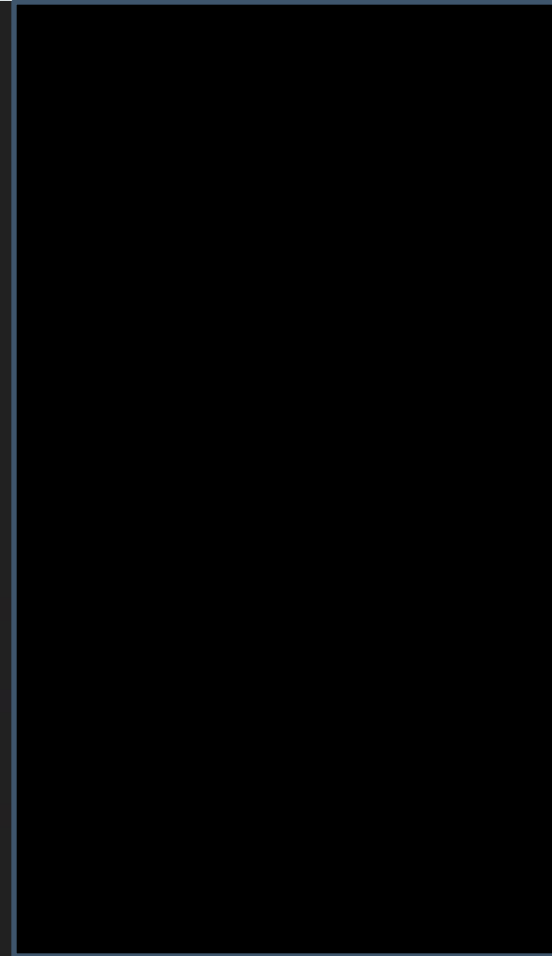
**LEFT**

**RIGHT**

# Schema Consistent



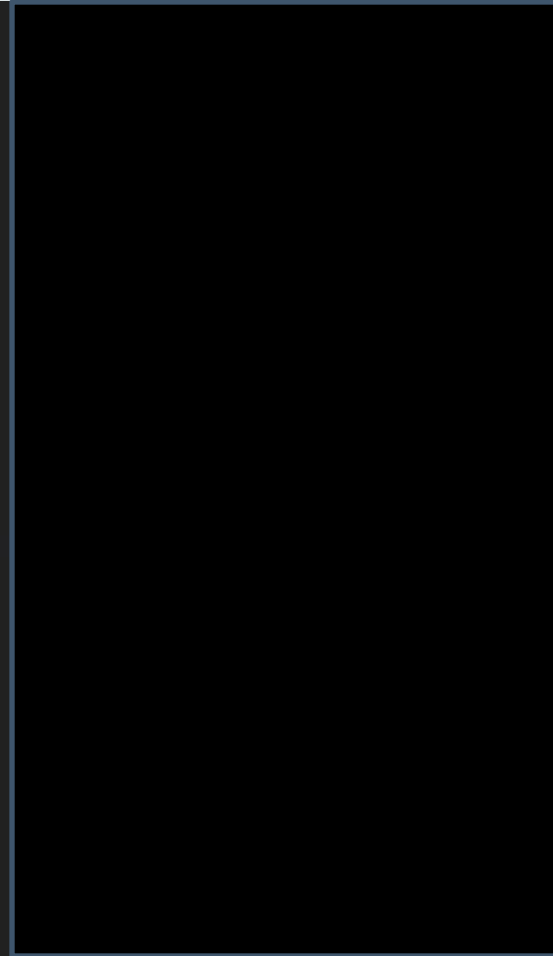
cheerful  
glorious  
happy  
triumph



# Schema Inconsistent



cheerful  
glorious  
happy  
triumph



# The Black - White Race Attitude Test



BEAUTY

HAPPY

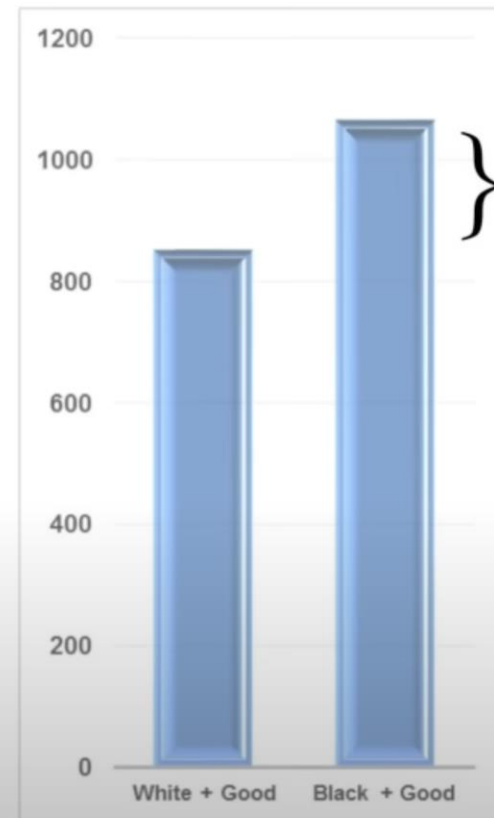
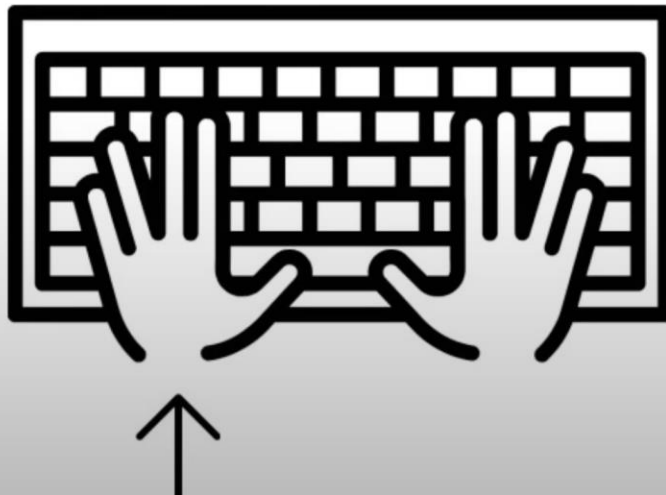
JOY



FILTH

SICK

GREED



IAT effect  
(in milliseconds)



■ +Minority ■ +Majority

Weapons + Black (488K)

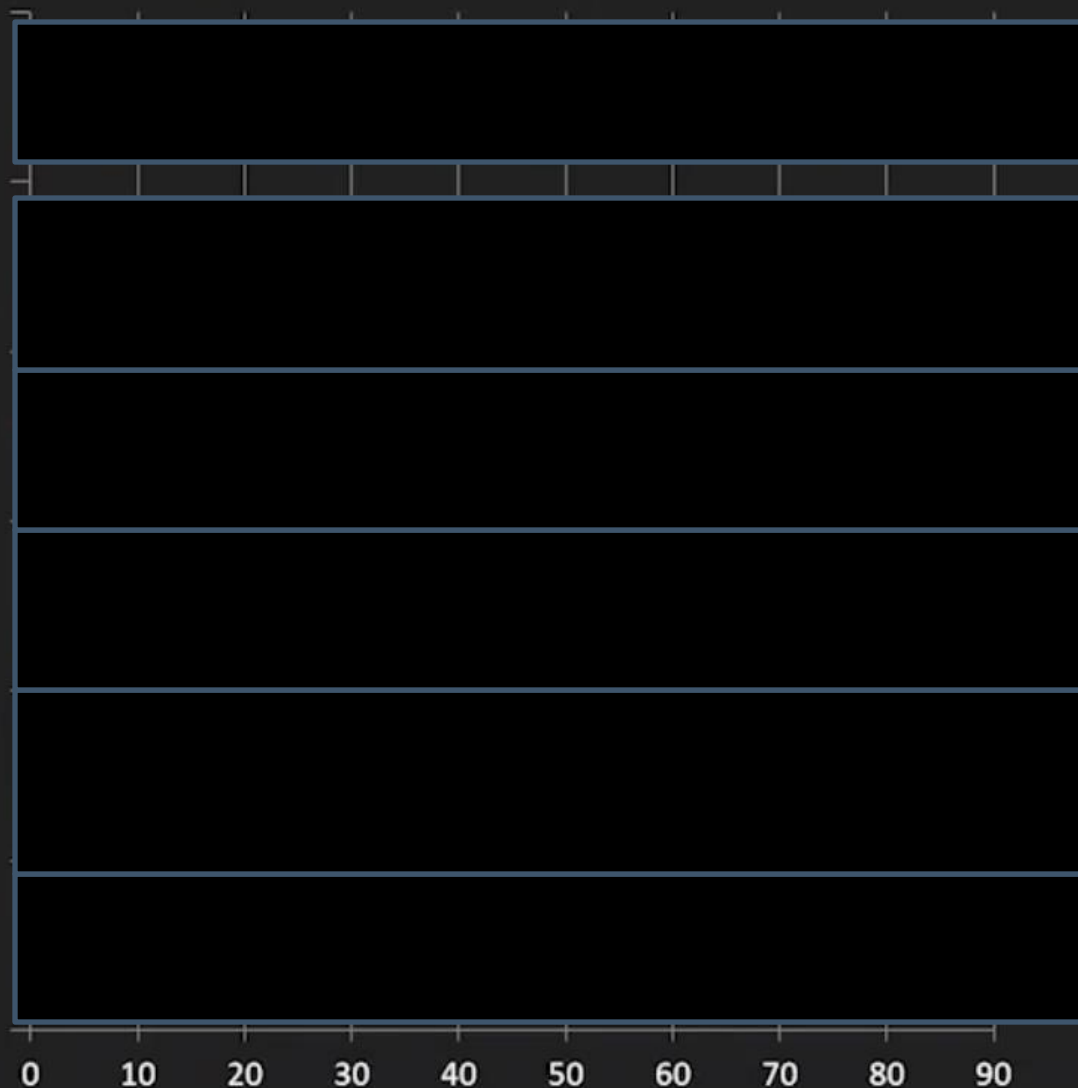
Disability (288K)

Weight (965K)

Sex O (1.5M)

Race (3.5M)

Age (758K)



Percentage Who Show Bias in Either Direction

Project Implicit Data June 2006-17: [Xu et al., 2017]



Project Implicit®

Uncovering Unconscious

## Implicit Attitudes



80%



69%



68%



76%



## Implicit Stereotypes



你好



# "The Doll Test"



# Types of Childhood Adversity

## Abuse



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

## Neglect



Physical



Emotional

## Household Dysfunction



Incarcerated  
relative



Divorce



Mother treated  
harshly

## Health Disparities



Substance use  
disorder/addiction



Mental  
illness

# 3

## types of

# ACEs

Adverse Childhood Experiences



# The Pair of ACEs

## Adverse Childhood Experiences

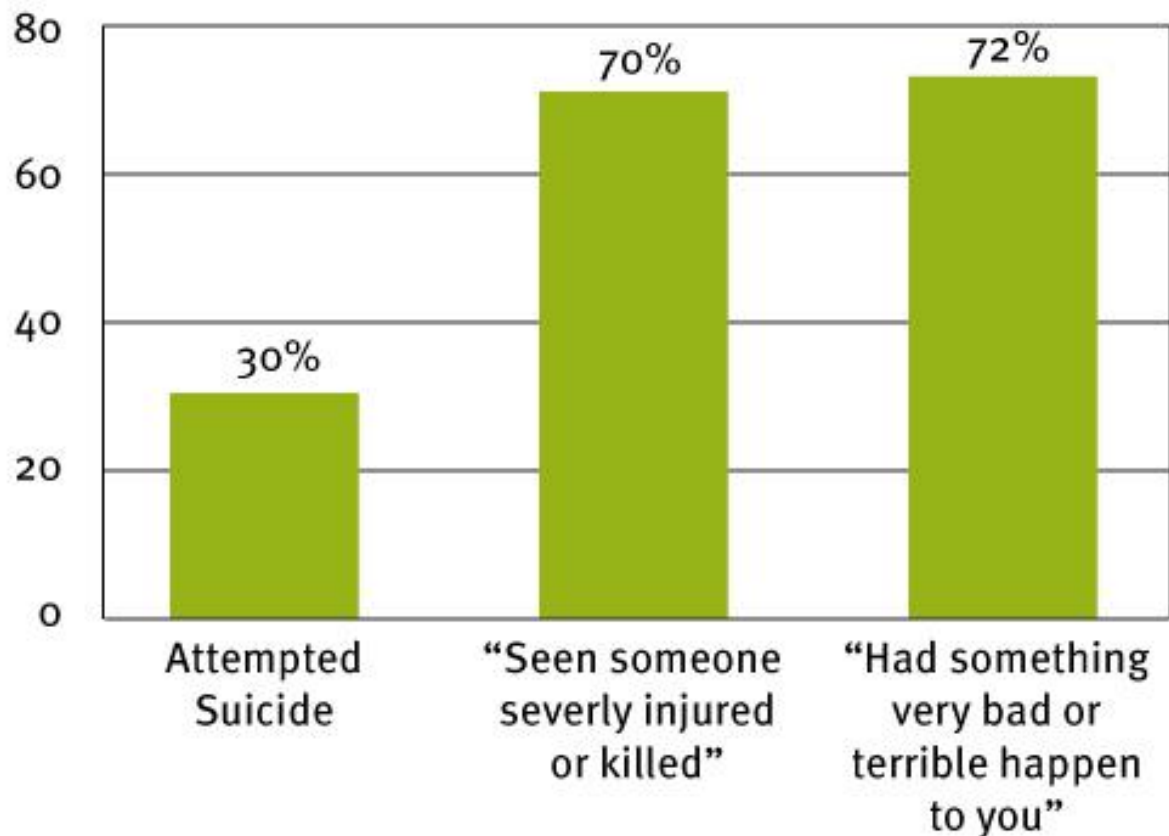


## Adverse Community Environments



**Ellis and Dietz (2017)**

## TRAUMATIC PASTS OF CONFINED YOUTH: PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH IN JUVENILE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES WHO HAVE EVER...



Source: Online data analysis of the Survey of Youth in Residential Placement, U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

# Urban Children Exposure to Violence

**\*75% heard gunshots**

**\*18% had seen a dead body**

**\*10% saw shooting or stabbing at home**

Buka et al. 2001

# Marcus' Story



Adapted from Ginwright, 2016



SOCIAL & SYSTEMS DEMANDS

TRAUMA

TRAUMA

ECONOMIC STATUS

RESIDENTIAL  
INSTABILITY

TRAUMA

SOCIAL AND PUBLIC  
INCIVILITIES

DAILY HASSLES

*“Trauma-informed care shifts the focus from:  
‘What’s wrong with you?’ to  
‘What happened to you?’”*

#### **Traditional**

What’s wrong with  
this person/  
community?

#### **Trauma-Informed Approach**

- What happened to  
this person/  
community?

#### **Healing Centered Engagement Approach**

- What’s right with  
this person/  
community?

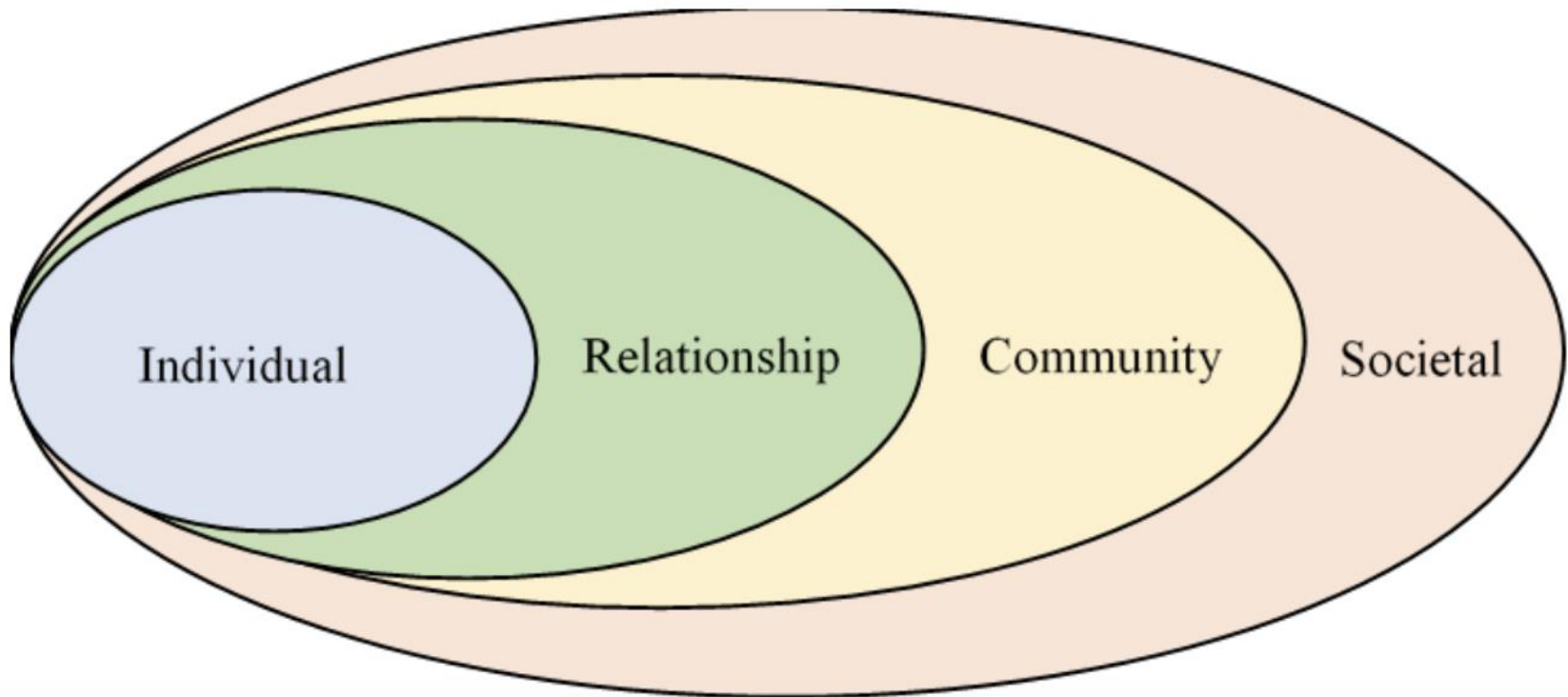
#### **HCRE**

- How can what’s  
right be used to  
heal/ restore the  
person or  
community from  
what happened?

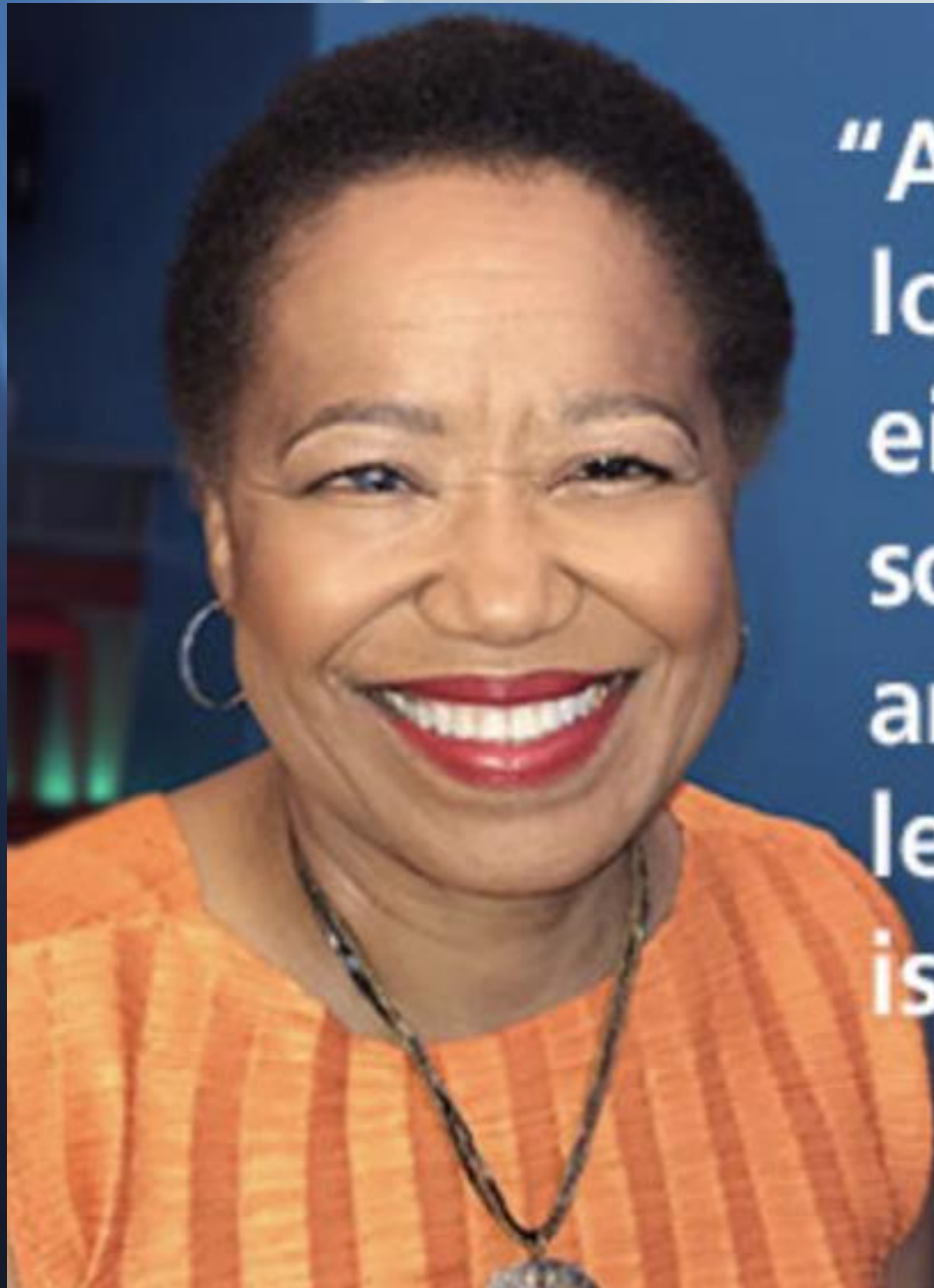
# healing **circles**



## THE SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL MODEL







“Any way you  
look at this,  
either from a  
societal level or  
an individual  
level, healing  
is required.”

— GAIL CHRISTOPHER

Trauma glasses off	Trauma glasses on
Manipulative	
Lazy	
Resistant	
Unmotivated	
Disrespectful	
Attention-Seeking	



**BEHAVIOR IS  
COMMUNICATION -  
LISTEN TO WHAT  
THEY ARE SAYING**

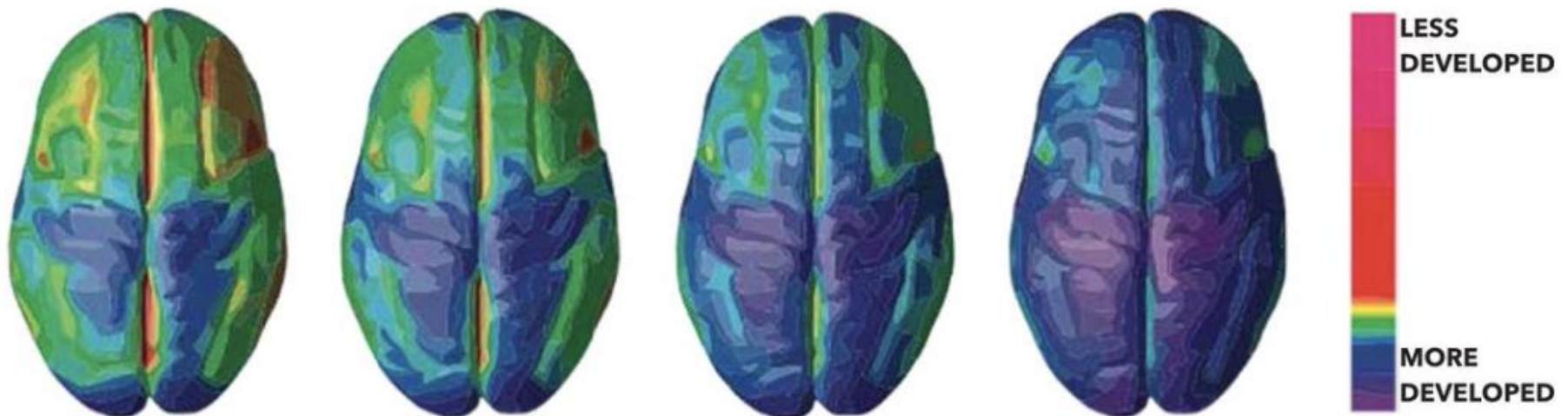
**CHILDHOOD  
TRAUMA IMPACTS  
THE BRAIN...**



Graphic: School To Prison Pipeline © Advocacy21nine

## THE BRAIN ISN'T FULLY MATURE UNTIL AT LEAST AGE 25

During adolescence the brain is still developing. The prefrontal cortex, which houses executive functioning skills that control impulses, judgment, and decision-making is one of the last areas of the brain to develop.









**Staff perspective  
(without considering trauma)**

- *Maria is lazy and unmotivated.*
- *She doesn't want to apply herself.*
- *She is wasting her potential.*
- *It's not okay for her to get away with acting like this in*



**Staff perspective  
(without considering trauma)**

- *Jamie is trying to get out of anything he doesn't want to do.*
- *He is disrespectful and purposefully tries to make me look foolish.*
- *He needs to learn that he cannot act like this without severe consequences.*
- *He has to learn that I am the authority figure and he needs to respect me.*

# Addressing Bias

in Delinquency and  
Child Welfare Systems

**Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Juvenile and Family Courts is Critical to Creating a Fair and Equitable System of Justice for All Youth.**



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES

[WWW.NCJFCJ.ORG](http://WWW.NCJFCJ.ORG)



**State Justice Institute**



**National Juvenile Defender Center**



THE SUPREME COURT *of* OHIO

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## JUVENILE COURT TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES

CONSIDERING TRAUMA IN CHILDREN



# IMPLICIT BIAS BENCH CARD

## MITIGATING BIAS IN DECISION MAKING

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THE KIRWAN INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF RACE & ETHNICITY

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### Act Consciously and Deliberately

- Before beginning, remind yourself of your role; the values of the institution; and your commitment to mitigating bias in your decision making processes and outcomes.
- Before beginning, engage in a mindfulness meditation exercise in order to bring yourself into the present, ground yourself, clear your mind, and focus fully on the task at hand.
- Allow more time for cases in which implicit bias may be a concern.
- Avoid decisions under rushed, stressed, distracted or pressured circumstances.
- Engage in thoughtful information processing. Objectively and deliberately consider the facts at hand. Avoid low-effort decisions or decision made on auto-pilot.
- Take special care in situations when you must respond quickly to avoid making snap decisions.
- Articulate the reasoning behind your decision before committing to a decision to allow yourself to critically review your decision making process.



## **ILLINOIS JUDICIAL BRANCH**

### **Bench Card: Achieving Fairness Free of Unconscious Bias – Deliberative Decision-Making**

#### **Common Barriers to Deliberativeness for Judges**

- Time pressure from heavy caseloads.
- Time pressure from complex cases.
- Time pressure from broad case types.
- Fatigue.
- Multi-tasking.
- Workplace distractions.
- Threats to safety.

Age Group	Percentage of Respondents
18-29	90%
30-49	88%
50-64	85%
65-74	82%
75+	78%



**DEFLATE**

- ✓ Recognize that you are fallible
- ✓ Avoid moral credentialing
- ✓ Cultivate internal motivation to be fair
- ✓ Keep learning to increase awareness



**DEBIAS**

- ✓ Change the built environment to display countertypical exemplars
- ✓ Expand social contact, and curate complexity not caricature
- ✓ Leverage your market power to feature diversity of talent





## DEFEND



Blind, dim, or temporarily cloak

- ✓ Consider **blinding** but watch out for “pass through” discrimination
- ✓ Consider **dimming** the intensity of social categories, by removing e.g., salient photographs
- ✓ Consider **temporary cloaking** (cloak identity, make tentative decision, then lift cloak to check for unintended consequences)



Cabin  
discretion



Use checklists, rubrics, algorithms



Develop decision aids collaboratively



© Jerry Kang 2021



**DATA**

- ☒ Count your own exercise of discretion
- ☒ Encourage institutional level counting
- ☒ Examine all red flags

# PROSECUTORIAL DATA TRANSPARENCY AND THE USE OF DATA DASHBOARDS SUMMIT

**MARCH 1-2, 2023 | MIAMI, FLORIDA**

Presented by the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys  
and  
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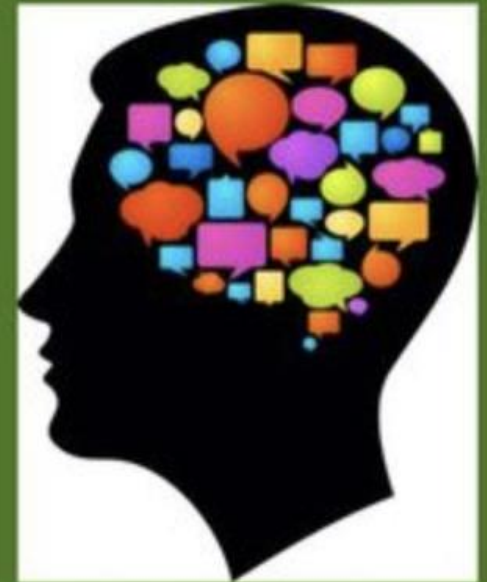
ASSOCIATION of  
PROSECUTING  
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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
ROBERT M. LAURENCE  
SCHOOL OF LAW  
Department of Training & Technology

# Bias Blind Spot

Bias blind spot is the tendency to see oneself as less biased than other people, or to be able to identify more cognitive biases in others than in oneself.

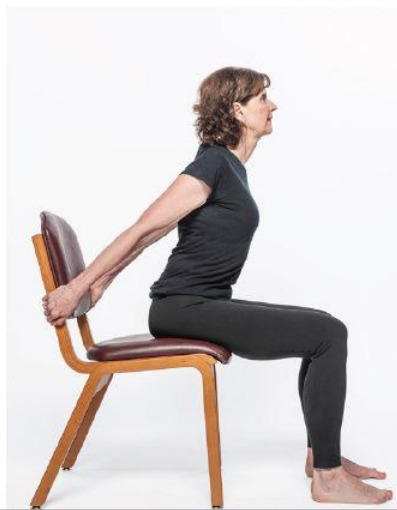


**COGNITIVE  
BIAS**



# Yoga *on the go!*

**8 easy poses you can do while sitting in your desk chair** | Hold poses for at least 3 to 5 deep breaths to release tension and stress. Do only as much as you can, comfortably.



# Yoga *on the go!*

**8 easy poses you can do standing in your cubicle** | Hold poses for at least 3 to 5 deep breaths to release tension and stress. Do only as much as you can, comfortably.



# Add mindfulness to your day

*in only 10-15 minutes*

Here are 4 ways to add mindfulness to your schedule, each way only takes 10-15 minutes of your time:

\*Remember, consistency is key.



Created and presented by  
Harvard Health Publications.

# Stanford SOCIAL INNOVATION<sup>Review</sup>

*Informing and inspiring leaders of social change*

SOCIAL ISSUES

SECTORS

SOLUTIONS

MAGAZINE

GLOBAL

Collaboration

## Healing Systems

How recognizing trauma in ourselves, other people, and the systems around us can open new pathways to solving social problems.

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By [Laura Calderon de la Barca](#), [Katherine Milligan](#) & [John Kania](#) | Feb. 12, 2024



# Healing Circles-Systems of Change



“You drown not by falling into a river but by staying submerged in it.”-Paulo Coelho



1. Build practices that support your own healing and well-being.
2. Create opportunities to build relationships
3. Create healing circles and activities focused on healing.
4. Support young people with creating justice in their communities.



A group of young Black girls are sitting on red bleachers in a gymnasium. They are all wearing yellow t-shirts with the BCDI-G logo. The girls are of various ages, mostly between 5 and 10 years old. They are looking towards the camera. The background is a plain white wall with a blue chalkboard visible in the upper right corner. The text "SOMETHING INSIDE SO STRONG" is overlaid in large, bold, white letters with a black outline. Below it, "BY LABI SIFFRE" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom, "BCDI-G'S 2016 CDF FREEDOM SCHOOL" is written in a white, sans-serif font.

# "SOMETHING INSIDE SO STRONG"

BY LABI SIFFRE

BCDI-G'S 2016 CDF FREEDOM SCHOOL