LGBTQ Bias and Health Care

Prepared for U of MN Medical School Sexual Health
Selective, April 21, 2015
Edited for posting online 7-31-2016

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LGBTQ concepts and terminology

- LGBTQ – umbrella acronym for people who are non-heterosexual and non-cisgender people
  - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer
  - Can become unwieldy (LGBTTPQQAA...)
- Alternative: gender and sexual minority (GSM)
- Cisgender: denoting or relating to a person whose self-identity conforms with the gender that corresponds to their biological sex

Sexual orientation

- Three dimensions of sexual orientation
  - Identity
  - Behavior
  - Attraction

- Do not align predictably:
  - ~ 1/2 of women who report sex with women identify as straight [1]
  - ~ 3/4 of men who report sex with men identify as straight [2]
  - ~ 1/2 of older lesbian women reported past marriage to a man [3]
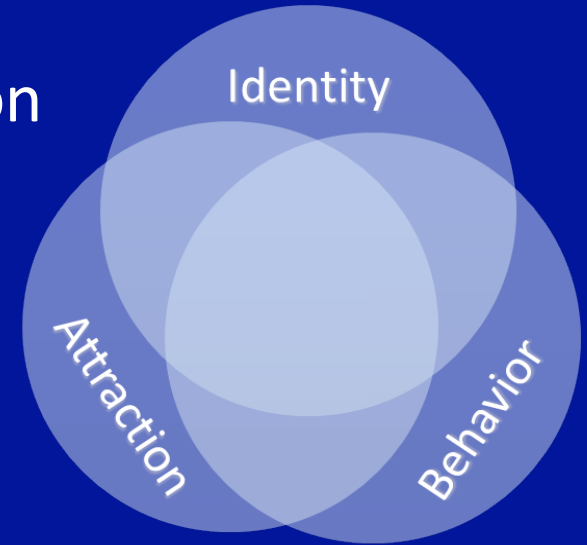
Gender identity and expression

- Gender identity – an internal sense of one's gender, how one labels oneself
- Gender expression – how one communicates one's gender within a given culture
  - May or may not be consistent with socially prescribed gender roles, and may or may not reflect one's gender identity
- Transgender – umbrella term for individuals whose gender identity or expression differs from their sex assigned at birth
  - Large diversity of gender identities (over 100)
- Gender identity and sexual orientation are separate concepts

Gender identity

Sexual orientation

LGBTQ demographics

- Exact numbers unknown

- Sexual identity:

  – Common estimate: 3.4% to 5.6% are LGB [1,2]

- Sexual behavior:

  – 8.2% of adults report same-sex sexual behavior [2]

- Sexual attraction

  – 11% of adults report same-sex attraction [2]

Transgender demographics

- Population estimates lacking

- Common estimate: 0.3% are transgender [1]
  - Likely conservative
  - Based on gender dysphoria diagnoses or gender affirmation procedures
  - 9,570,000 (of 319 million) in US

- 2.0% to 2.4% have gender identity/expression that differs from sex assigned at birth

9570000

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LGBTQ health disparities

- Higher risk of depression and anxiety, suicidal ideation, substance use
- Higher prevalence of risk behaviors
  - Smoking
  - Alcohol use
  - Unhealthy weight behaviors
- Disparities in physical health
  - CVD, obesity, HIV and STIs, certain cancers

Problem:

Disparities between hetero and LGBT patients.

IOM Report
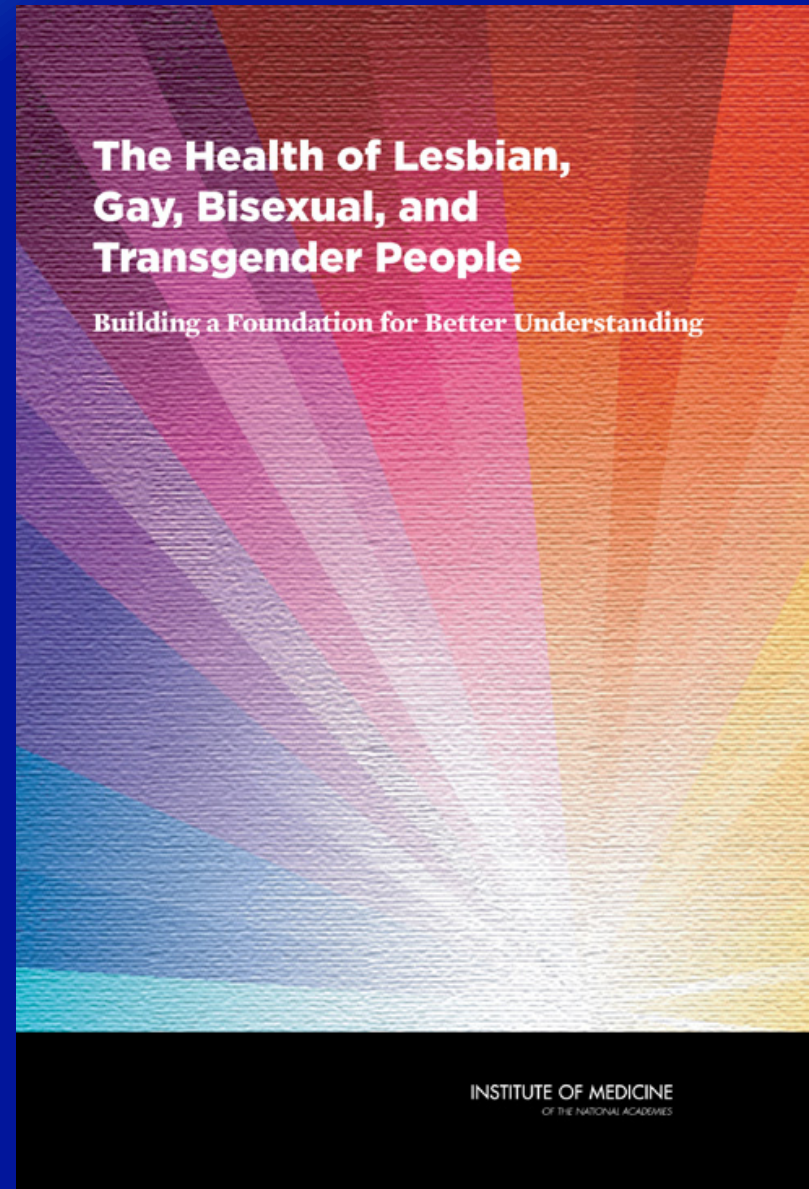
"...LGBT individuals have reported experiencing stigma, prejudice and bias when seeking health care."
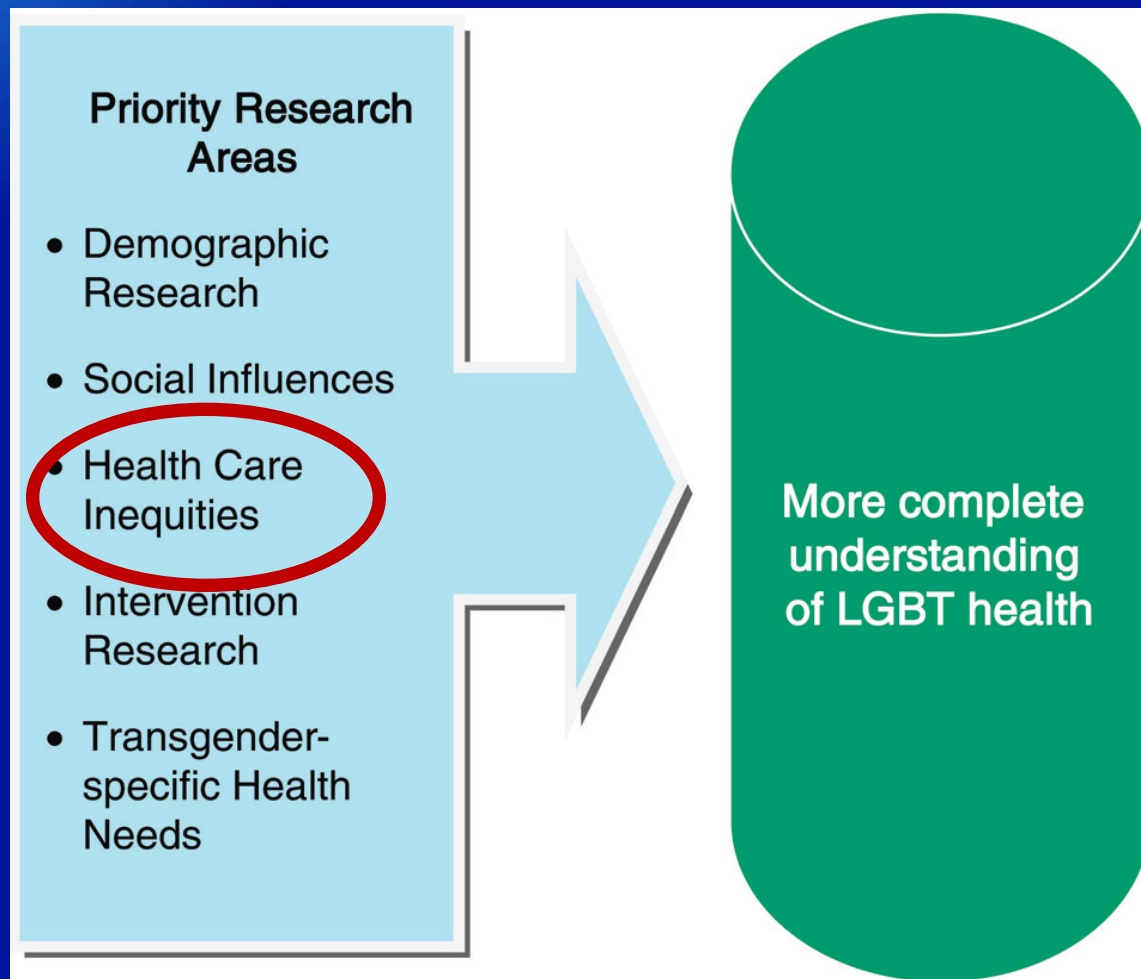
Priority Research Areas

- Demographic Research
- Social Influences
- Health Care Inequities
- Intervention Research
- Transgender-specific Health Needs

More complete understanding of LGBT health

Figure 1: Research Agenda, pg 3, Report Brief (IOM, 2011)

PARTNERS IN
EQUITY &
INCLUSION

Health Disparity #2: LGB adults are more likely to delay or not seek medical care.

% of adults delaying or not seeking health care

17%
29%

Health Disparity #3: LGB adults are more likely to delay or not get needed prescription medicine.

% of adults delaying or not getting prescriptions

13%
22%

Health Disparity #4: LGB adults are more likely to receive health care services in emergency rooms.

% of adults receiving ER care

18%
24%

Stunning lack of research

"Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals have unique health experiences and needs, but as a nation, **we do not know exactly what these experiences and needs are.** "

The Health of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People

Building a Foundation for Better Understanding

INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE
OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES

IOM Report

"…one of the barriers to accessing quality health care…is a lack of providers who are knowledgeable about LGBT health needs as well as a **fear of discrimination** in health care settings"
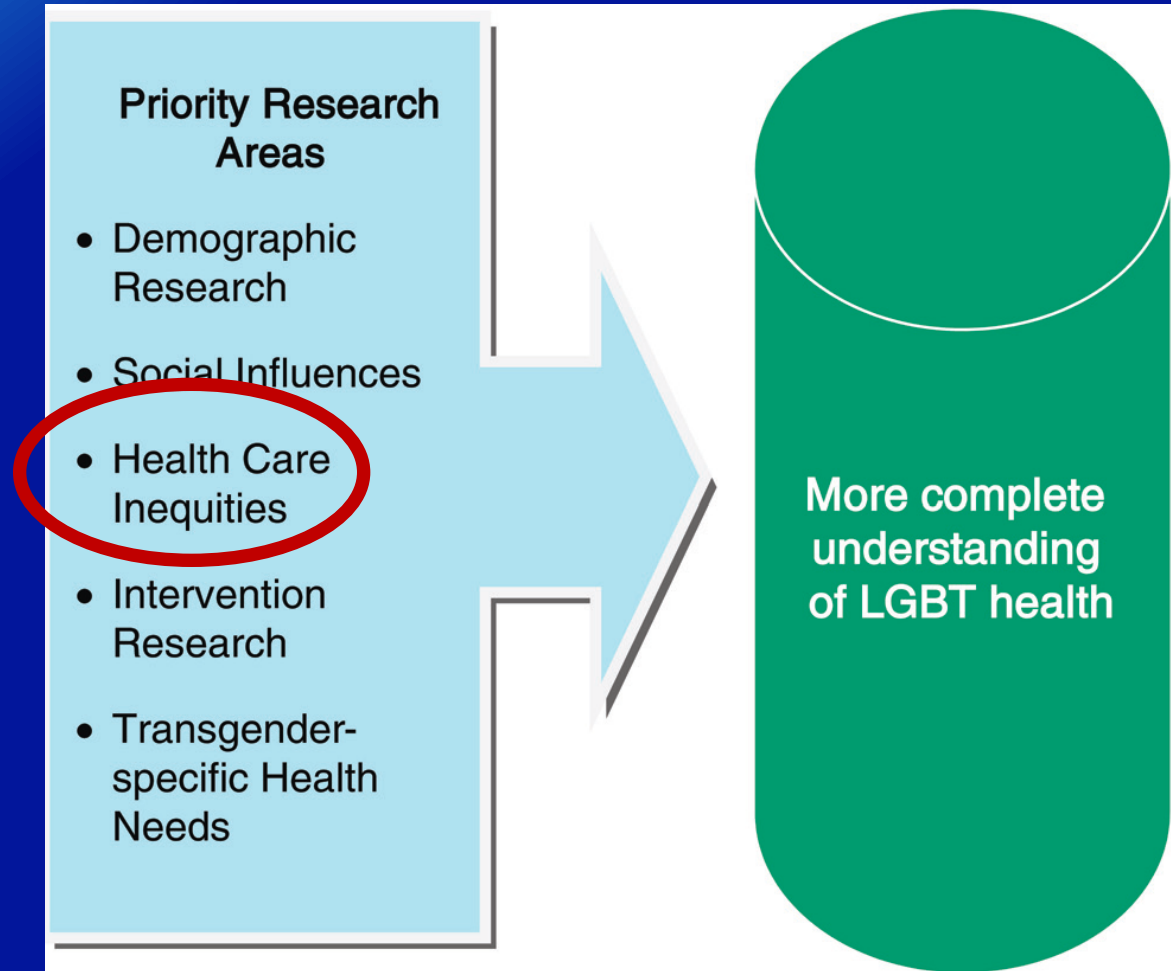

Priority Research Areas

- Demographic Research
- Social Influences
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More complete understanding of LGBT health

Figure 1: Research Agenda, pg 3 Report Brief

Challenges in Studying LGBT Inequities In Health Care

- No way to use medical record or claims data to systematically compare care (not coded).

- Difficult to obtain representative samples.

- *MAYO (PI Rullo with REIH) testing administration of routine SOGI questions*

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Factors affecting interpersonal and technical quality of care for LGBTQ patients

- Provider & staff:
  - Explicit (conscious) attitudes and feelings
  - Implicit (unconscious) attitudes and feelings
  - Inter-group anxiety (discomfort)
  - Heteronormativity
  - Lack of information on care needs
- Patient & partner, friends, family companions
  - Prior experiences
  - Expectations, worries and fears

- Explicit attitudes towards LGBT have improved dramatically over the past few decades, particularly among well educated individuals who hold egalitarian values.[1]

- *Implicit* bias is still pervasive, even among those who have egalitarian beliefs.

1.Pew Research Center, 2011

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Attitudes still are prevalent in general populations

http://www.gallup.com/poll/1651/gay-lesbian-rights.aspx

Do you think gay or lesbian relations between consenting adults should or should not be legal?

	Should be legal	Should not be legal	No opinion
	%	%	%
2013 Jul 10-14	64	31	5
2013 May 2-7	65	31	5
2012 Nov 26-29	64	33	3
2012 May 3-6	63	31	6
2011 Dec 15-18	62	33	5
2011 May 5-8	64	32	4
2010 May 3-6	58	36	6
2009 May 7-10	56	40	4
2008 May 8-11 ^	55	40	5
2007 May 10-13	59	37	4
2006 May 8-11 †	56	40	4
2005 Aug 22-25	49	44	7
2005 May 2-5	52	43	5
2004 May 2-4	52	43	5
2004 Jan 9-11	46	49	5

Gallup Poll "*Do you personally believe gay or lesbian relations are morally acceptable or morally wrong?*"

Morality of Gay/Lesbians Relations -- 2001-2012

Do you personally believe gay or lesbian relations are morally acceptable or morally wrong?

- ■ % Morally acceptable
- ■ % Morally wrong

53 55 52 54 51 51 49 48 52 56 54

40 38 44 42 45 44 47 48 43 39 42

2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012
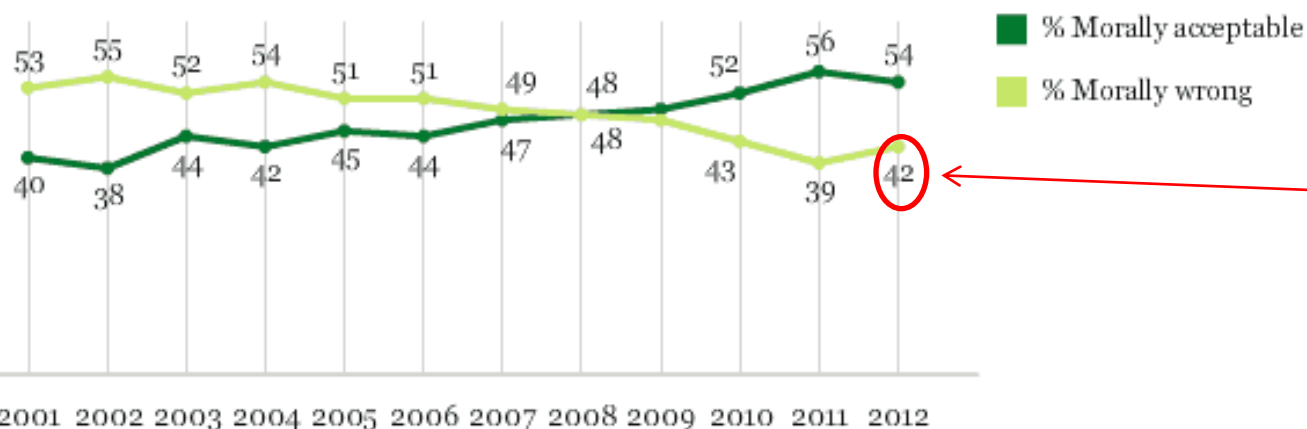
Note: 2001-2004 wording: Homosexual behavior
Note: 2006-2008 wording: Homosexual relations

GALLUP

42% "Morally Wrong"

Public attitudes toward transgender people
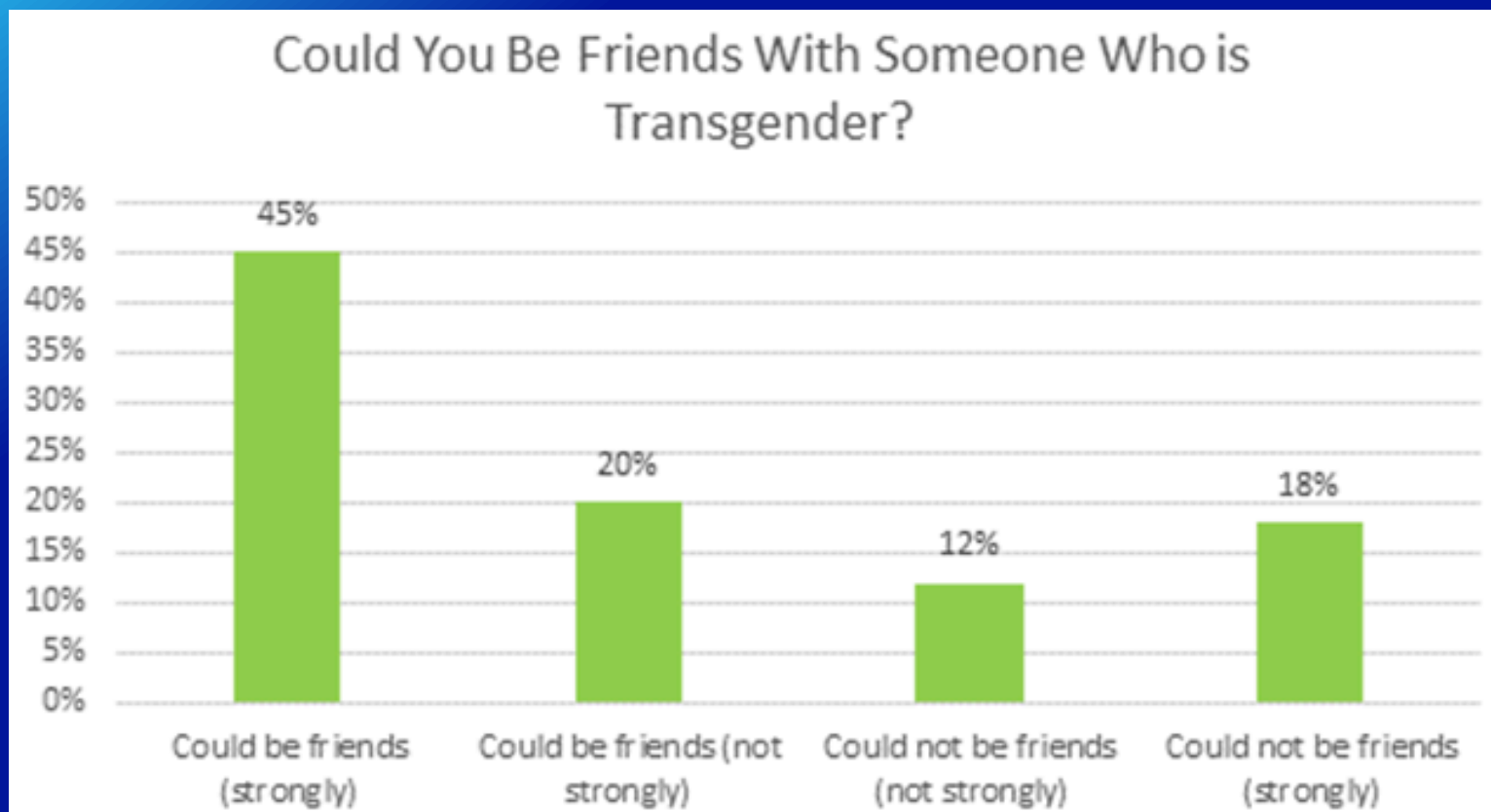
Commonly understood as stigmatized
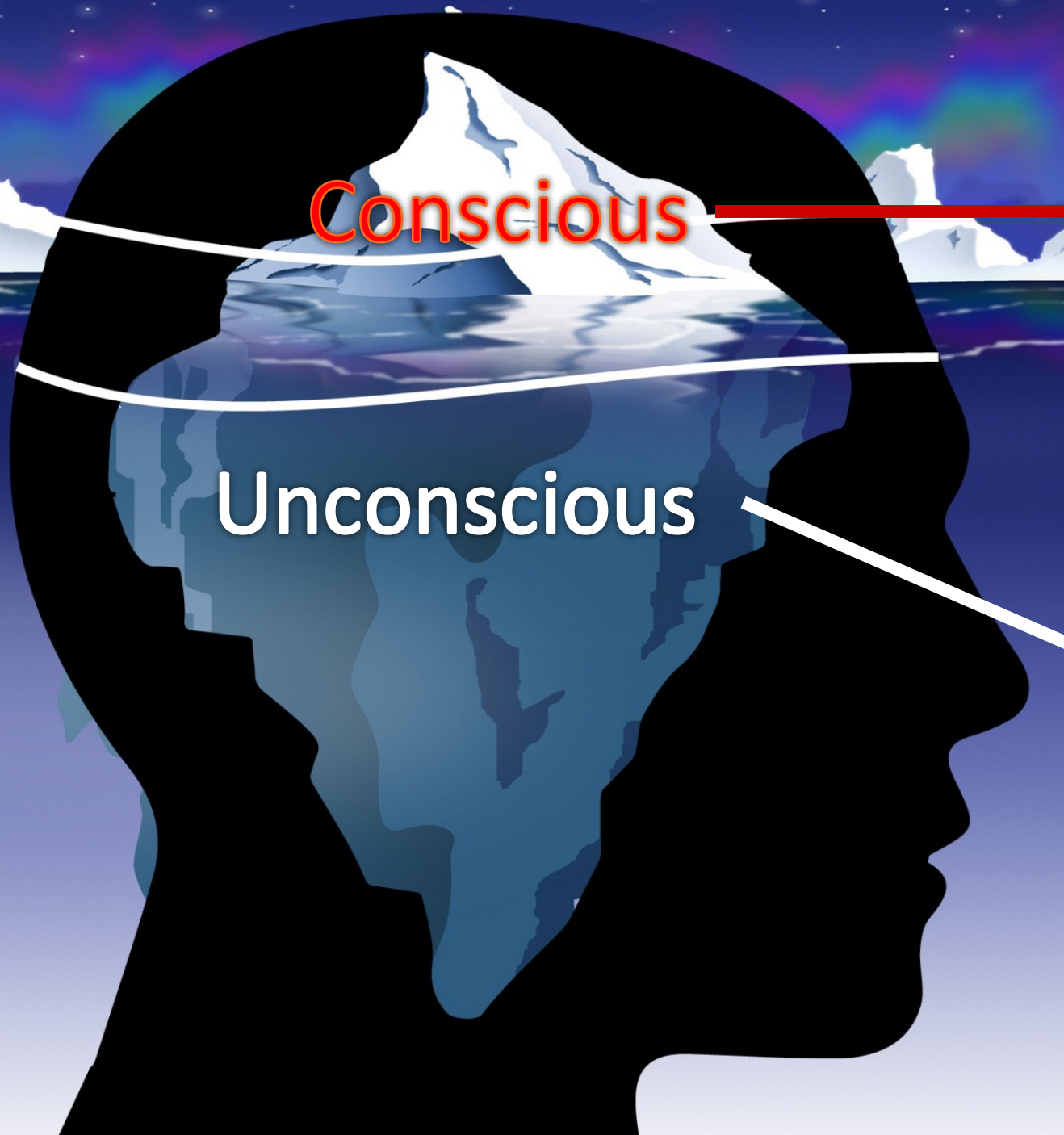
Conscious → Explicit Effortful Deliberative Slow

Unconscious → Implicit Effortless Automatic Fast

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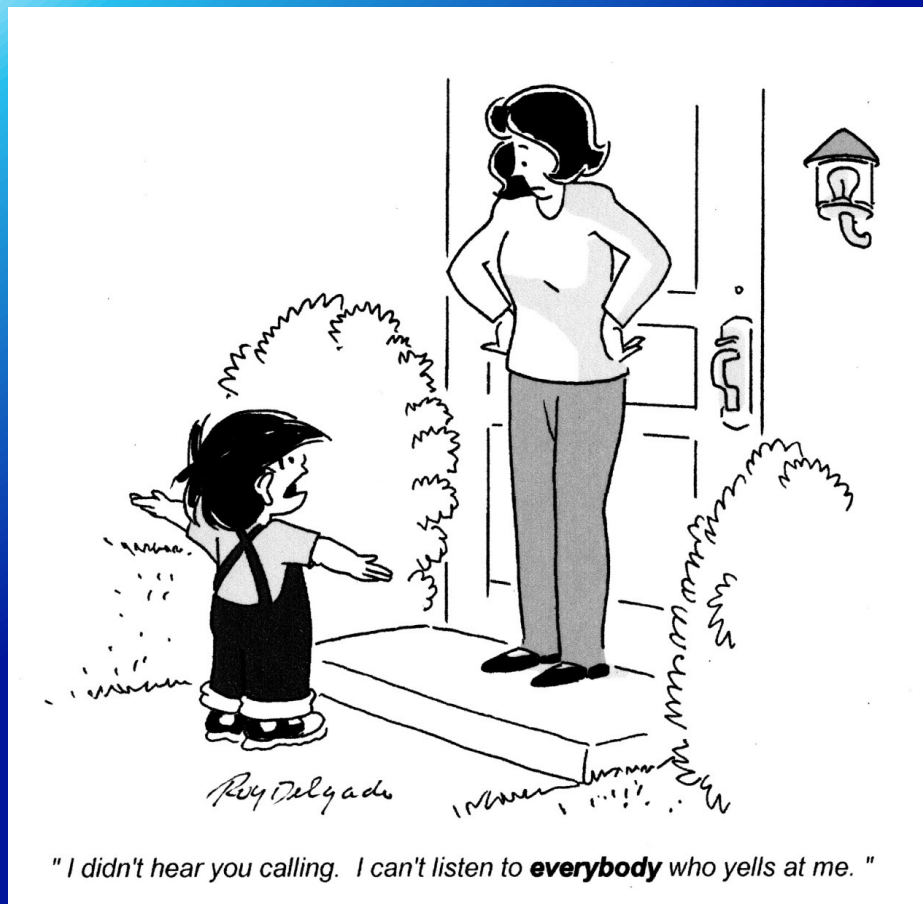Implicit (unconscious) mental processes help us deal with the millions of bits of information that surround us

Automatically affects what we remember and stores connections between things

" I didn't hear you calling. I can't listen to **everybody** who yells at me. "
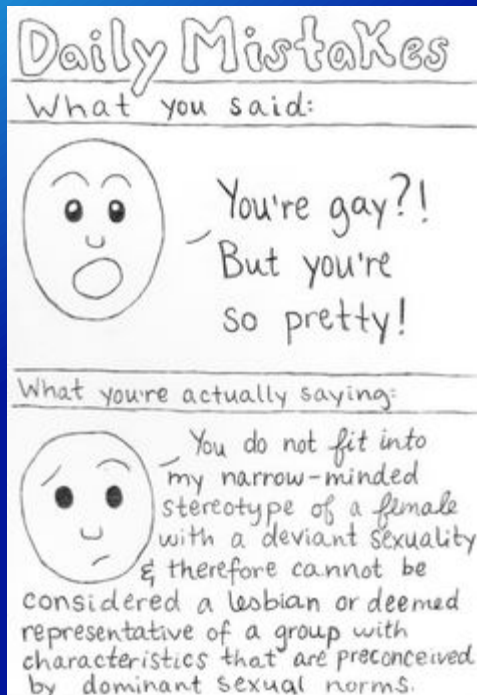
"Selective Attention Bias"

- Notice things about patients that confirm our expectations

- Consistent with our automatic "away" or "towards" emotions

"I didn't hear you calling. I can't listen to ***everybody*** who yells at me"

...tomatically guides what we notice and remember

"Selective Attention
Selective Recall Bias"

Creates a lens through which information is interpreted.
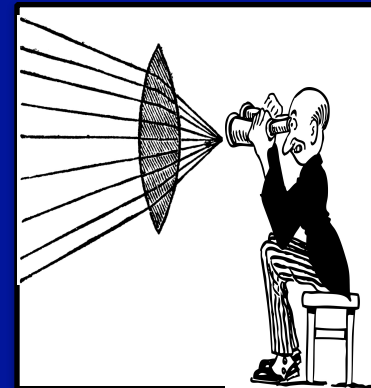
Affective Response

- Implicit bias thought to involve a stronger affective component than explicit

- Findings of increased amygdala activity when white participants viewed faces of unknown black people.

- Magnitude of amygdala activation correlated with participants' IAT score

Implicit LG Bias

van Ryn & colleagues, Medical Student CHANGE Study
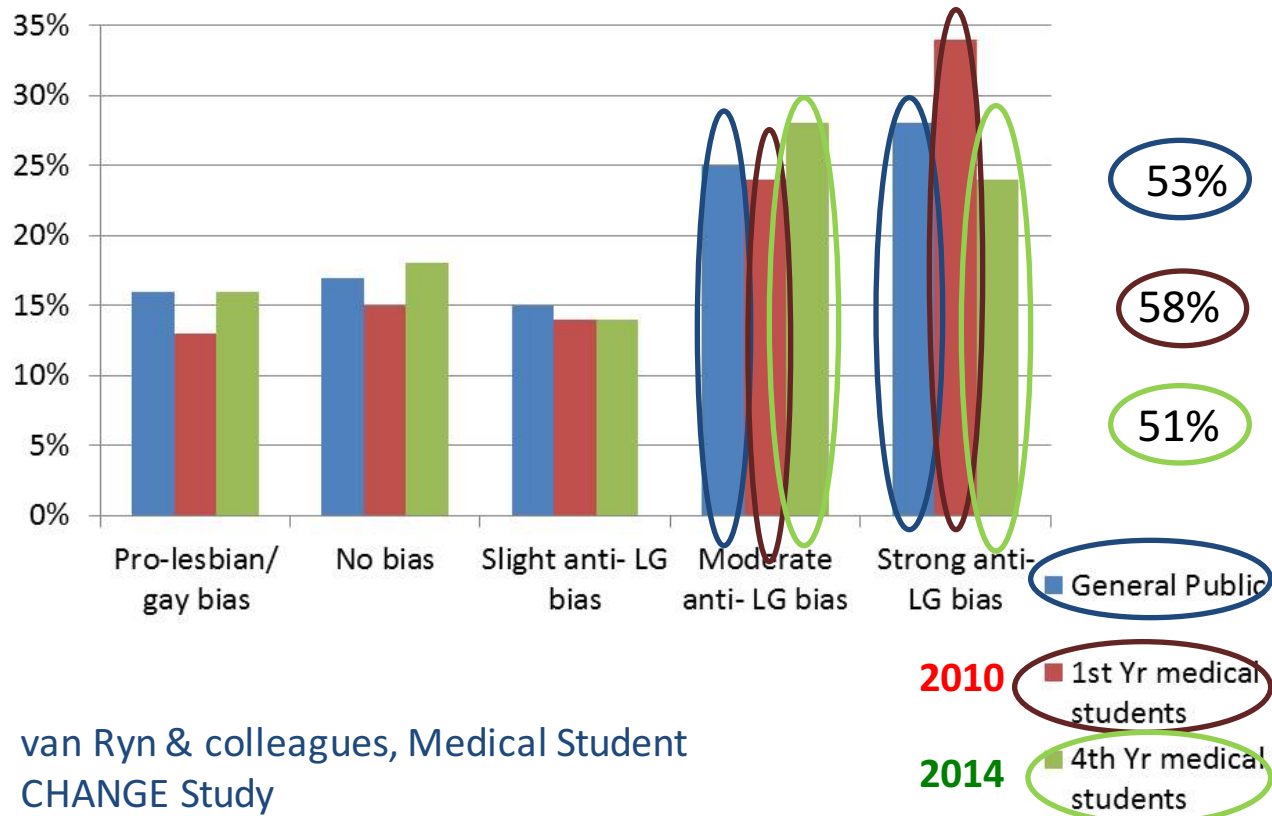
Implicit preference for heterosexuals: Response to these pairings is faster…

Gay/Lesbian Homosexual **& unpleasant**

pain

death

stink

grief

agony

filth

tragedy

vomit

pleasant **&** **Straight/ Heterosexual**

gentle

happy

smile

joy

warmth

pleasure

paradise

rainbow

…than response to these pairings

Straight/ Heterosexual   **& unpleasant**

pain

death

stink

grief

agony

filth

tragedy

vomit

pleasant   **&**   **Gay/Lesbian Homosexual**

gentle

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joy

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pleasure

paradise

rainbow

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Gender Non-conformity Can Trigger Negative Reactions Regardless of Sexual Orientation
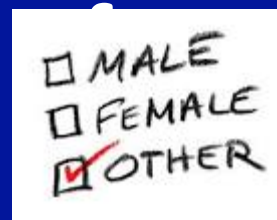
People may react to…

- Sexual orientation
- Gender non-conformity

—A meta-analysis of more than 100 studies concluded that implicit bias reliably predicts people's behavior and attitudes, and that the test is a better predictor of interracial behavior than self-description.

Studies looking at the intersection of explicit and implicit attitudes suggest that...

- ...providers with positive explicit and negative implicit bias are:
  - more likely to experience anxiety and discomfort than hostility with GL patients
  - have less direct eye contact
  - Non-verbal behavior interpreted as unfriendly
  - lack of correspondence between nonverbal behavior and verbal friendliness may lead to suspicions of duplicity , confusion, anxiety in GL patients.

Intergroup Anxiety

- Low explicit, high implicit bias can cause intergroup anxiety

Intergroup anxiety effects:

- Interferes with effective communication,

- Negatively impacts the nature and experience of intergroup interaction,

- May exacerbate negative feelings about members of the other group and

- Result in desire to avoid such contact in the future

In-group bias: automatic preferences for people who seem "like us". Outdated cognitive wiring.
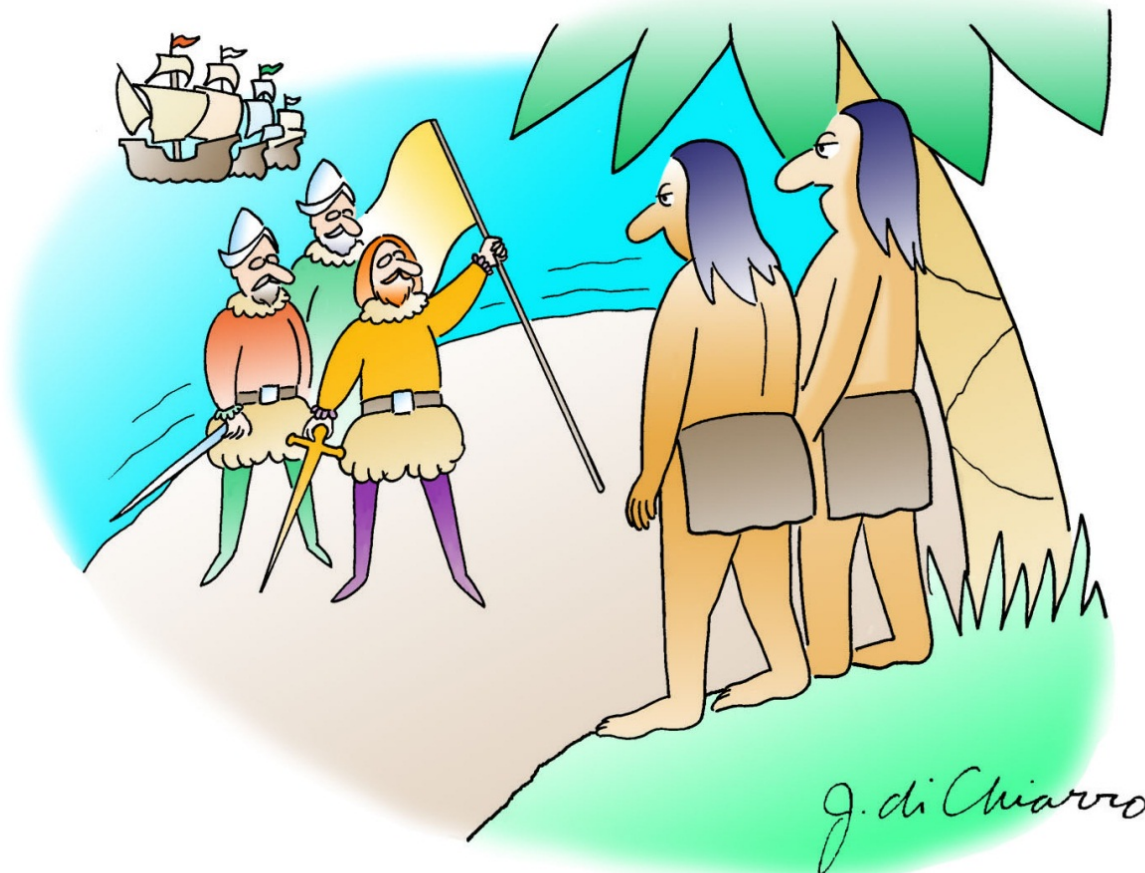
"Not to worry. Diversity can only enrich our culture."

In-group bias

"I'm afraid you didn't get the job I don't think you would fit in here"

"The shareholders want more cultural diversity. Choose a si-man, hai-man, and ja-man to replace three yes-men."

HETERONORMATIVITY

- Heteronormativity is the notion that heterosexuality is the normal and standard expression of sexual attraction.
- can be explicit or implicit.
  – lack of non-heterosexual examples or the
  – Assumption that everyone in a room is
- All forms of heteronormativity contribute to creating a hostile, exclusionary environment for LGBT patients.

You don't have to look different to feel like you don't fit in: Safety and Identity Threat

Belonging (4732 Medical Students) at 1ˢᵗ and 4ᵗʰ year of medical school)
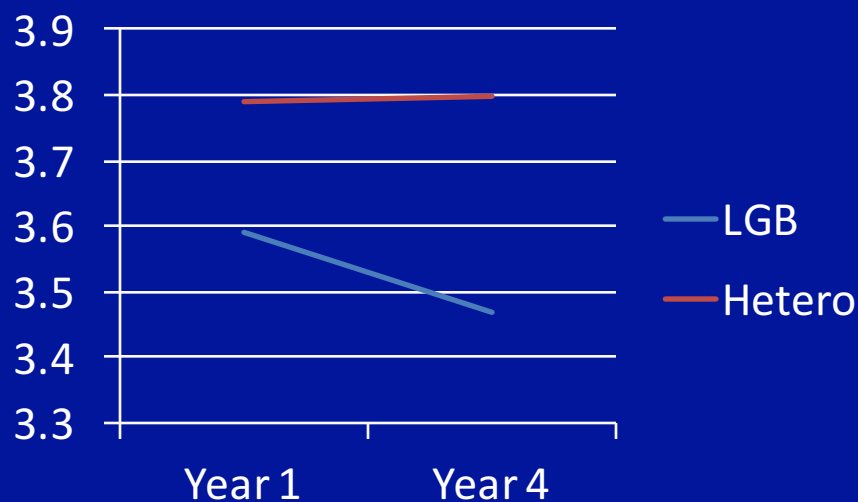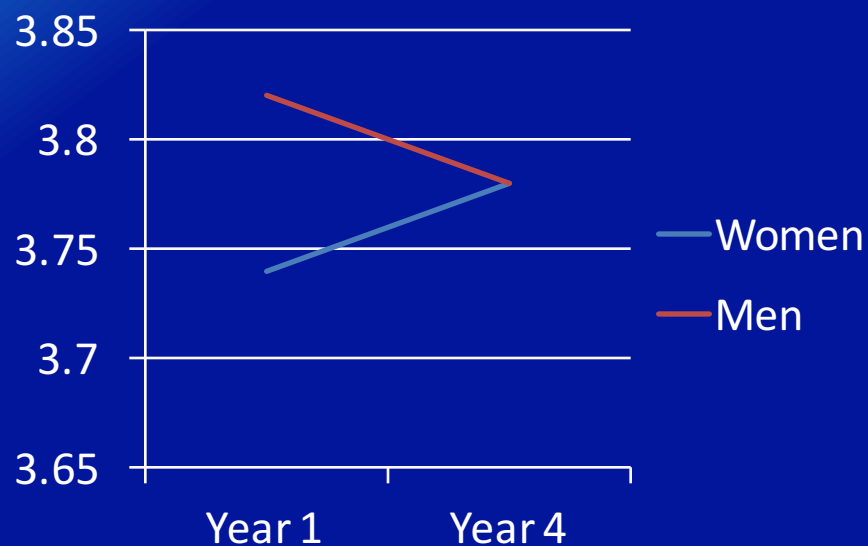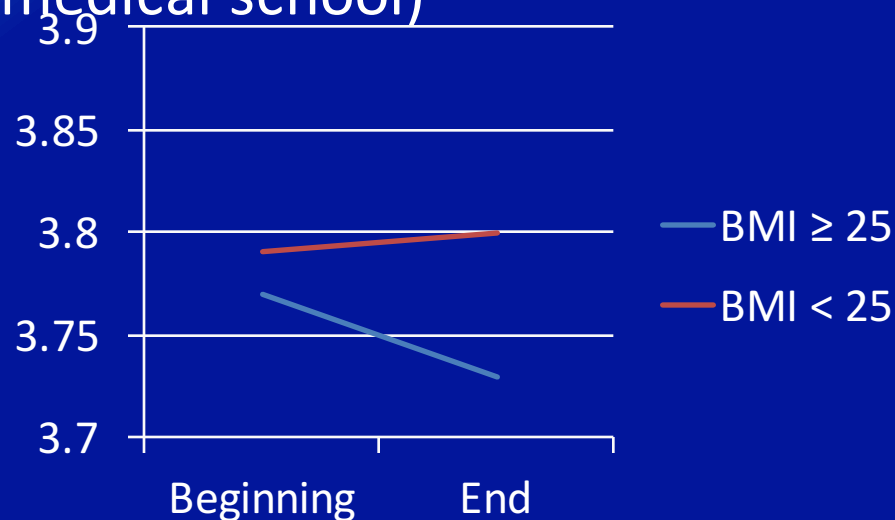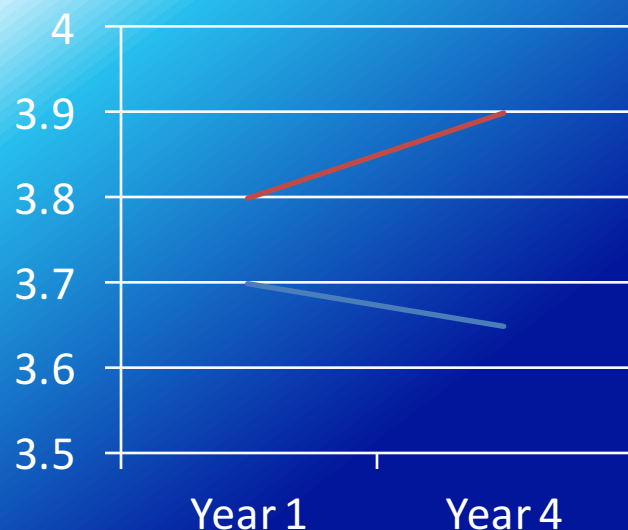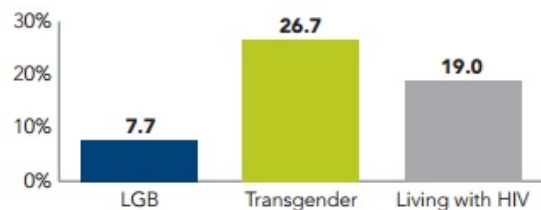
Table 1: I was refused needed health care

Table 2: Health care professionals refused to touch me or used excessive precautions

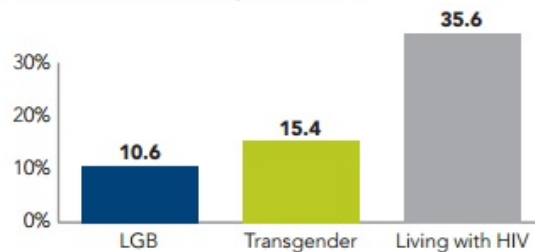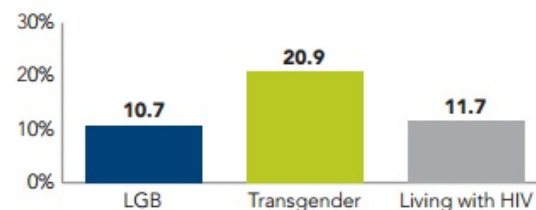Table 3: Health care professionals used harsh or abusive language

Recommendations

Self-awareness
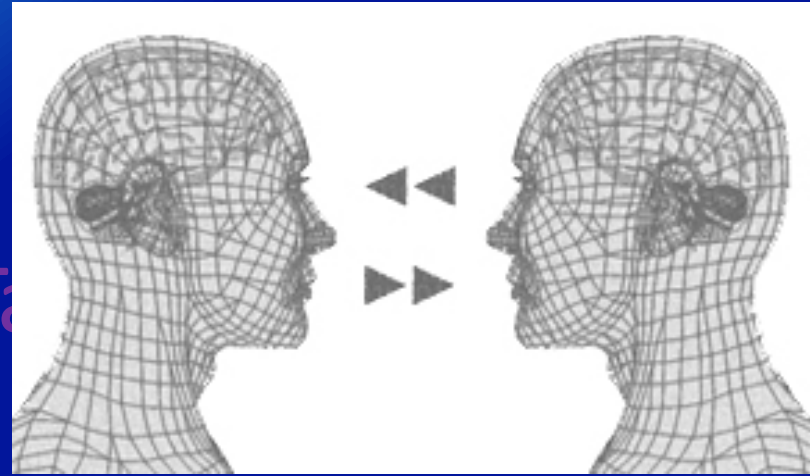
- Might require some self-acceptance work

Protect and conserve your mental resources

- Emotional Regulation Skills

- Emotion Shifting- Positive emotional states

- All the usual advice: sleep well, exercise, eat well, if possible reduce stressors

Practice Perspective-Taking

- Imagine yourself in their shoes.

- If possible, check your perceptions.

  - "I am wondering how I might see it if I were looking through your eyes…"

  - "I was imagining being in your shoes here and it occurred to me that I would (feel/think/be)…. Am I close?"

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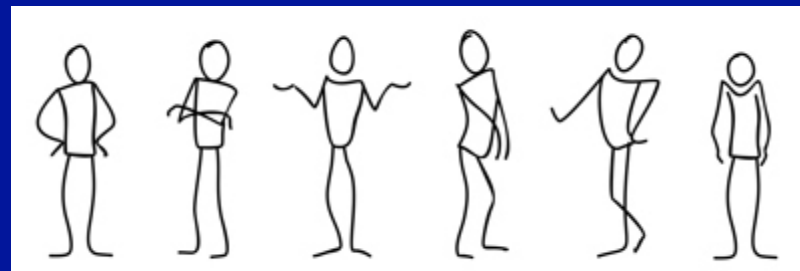Brush up on your partnership-building skills (Promote a common In-group connection)
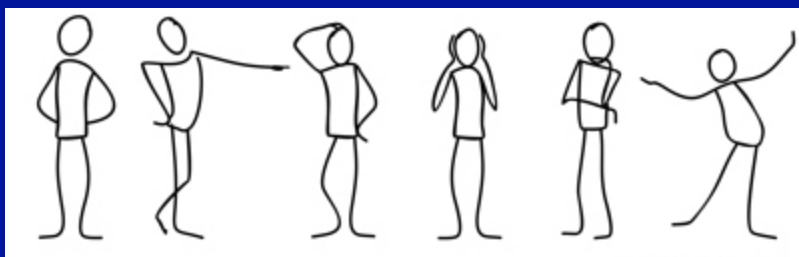
- Potentially most powerful approach to reducing bias
- Facilitates empathy
- Reduces implicit bias
- Increases trust
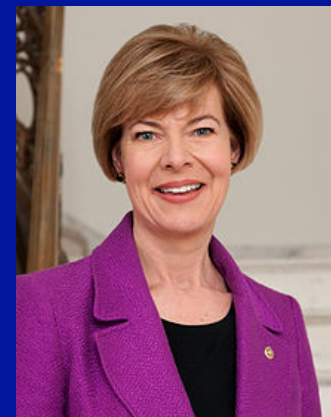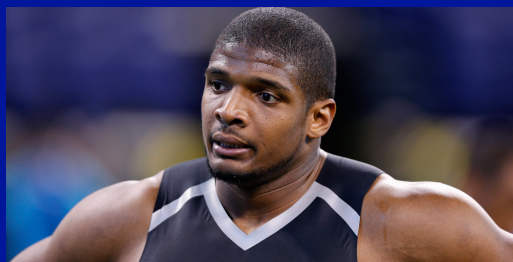
Change norms, set an example

- Pay attention to your body language
- Can you find someone to observe and give you feedback?

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Seek and pay attention to counter-stereotype examples

Change norms, set an example

Practice non-defensiveness

- **Role-model** <u>learning and growth</u> approach

- Welcome requests to reexamine your decisions for possible unintended biases.

- Welcome feedback on behavior.

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INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR RECOMMENDATIONS: ESPECIALLY RELEVANT TO LEADERS

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Self-Examination
Who's In Your "In-Group"?

- Who are your confidantes and trusted advisors when you make decisions?

- Whose opinions do you value most?

  - **Examine:** Conduct fearless exploration of WHY these individuals are influential.

  - **Experiment:** Practice deep listening to the people you are most likely to discount.

Dual Processing Theories of Information Processing

- **Explicit:** Reflective system for controlled processing.
  - Conscious, deliberative
  - Effortful, requires motivation
  - Takes more time

- **Implicit:** Reflexive system for automatic processing.
  - Requires little effort
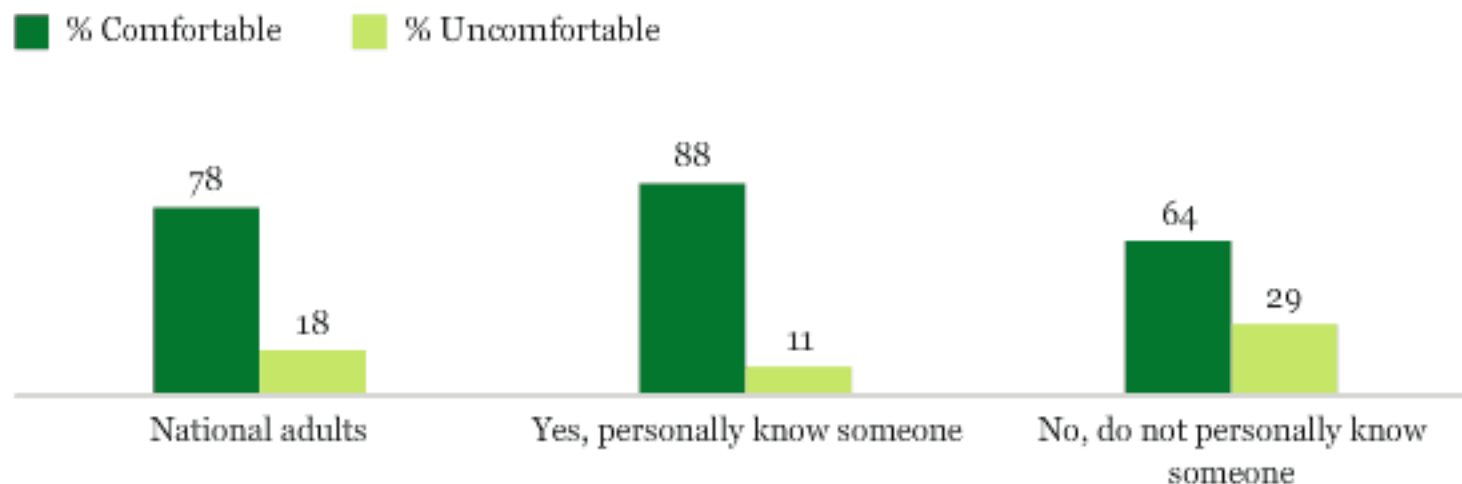 - Fast

- Different neural structures

Implicit processes serve need for cognitive efficiency

Contact and comfort with gay and lesbian people

Comfort Level Around Gays and Lesbians, by Personally Knowing Someone Who Is Gay or Lesbian

% Comfortable   % Uncomfortable

National adults: 78 / 18
Yes, personally know someone: 88 / 11
No, do not personally know someone: 64 / 29

USA Today/Gallup poll, May 7-10, 2009

GALLUP POLL

Comments, questions, suggestions?

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