



Building a Culture of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion through...

BREAKING DOWN STEREOTYPES**DID YOU KNOW?**

Stereotypes help us simplify our social world since they reduce the amount of thinking we must do when we meet a new person. Unfortunately, this overgeneralization forms biases.

CONTEXT:

A stereotype is a trait, characteristic, or idea commonly associated with members of a particular category or group such as gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, nationality, age, socioeconomic status, language, and so forth.

When you stereotype something or someone, you assume he/she/they possess a trait, characteristic, or idea—which you have consciously or unconsciously assigned them. This overgeneralization forms biases, which affect the way we perceive and judge others, make snap decisions, and consciously or unconsciously act with a prejudice.

Some examples of stereotypes are:

- **Cultural stereotypes** (*people from x country are rude; people from x country are all smart and talented*)
- **Social stereotypes** (*x types of people are weird; people from x and y group are shallow; x people are happy*)
- **Racial stereotypes** (*people of x race are dangerous; people of x race are athletic; people of x race are good at science*)
- **Gender stereotypes** (*x gender is better at something than y gender; people of x gender are untidy and disorganized; people of x gender are beautiful*)
- **Religious stereotypes** (*people who practice x religion are intolerant; people who practice x religion are generous*)

It is important to acknowledge and identify stereotypes. Understand that people have negative attitudes derived from stereotypes. It is what we do with that awareness that can start to cause a positive change. Be cognizant of your reactions and assumptions.

CONVERSATION ENGAGEMENTS:

1. Have you made assumptions about people? Have they made them about you? How did you feel?
2. What may you say to someone you have observed making a stereotype about someone or a situation?
3. What action do you feel motivated to take based on what you learned?
4. What other ideas or thoughts come to mind?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- <https://uc.sumtotal.host/Core/pillarRedirect?relyingParty=LM&url=core%2Factivitydetails%2FViewActivityDetails%3FActivityId%3D321056%26UserMode%3D0>
- <https://guides.stlcc.edu/stereotypes>
- <https://creativeequitytoolkit.org/concept/stereotyping/>