

Addressing Bias and Cultivating Belonging

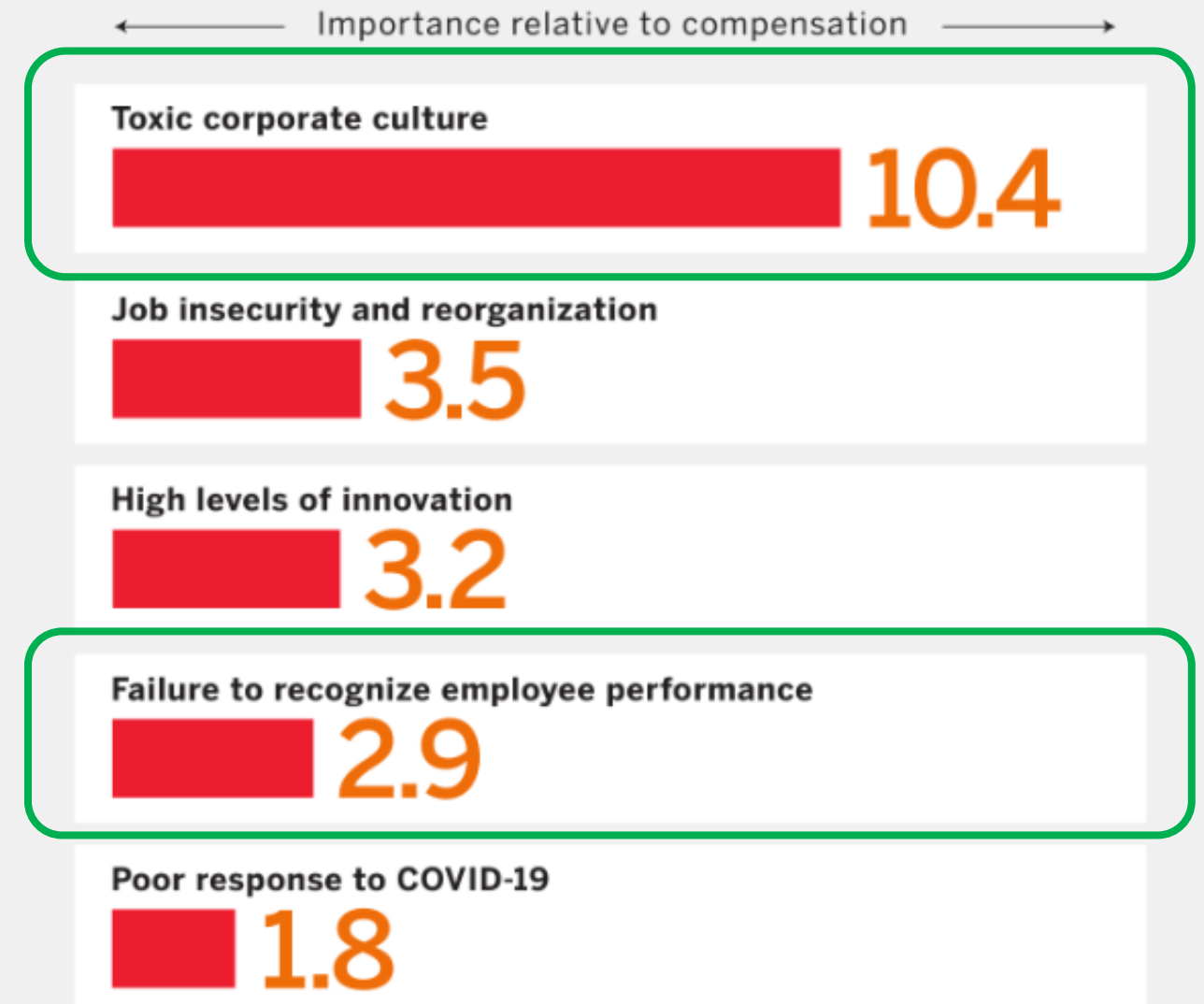
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Jake Van Epps, PhD

The Great Resignation

Top Predictors of Attrition During the Great Resignation

The authors analyzed the impact of more than 170 cultural topics on employee attrition in Culture 500 companies from April through September 2021. These five topics were the leading predictors of attrition. Each bar indicates the level of importance of each topic for attrition relative to employee compensation. A toxic culture is 10.4 times more likely to contribute to attrition than compensation.



DISRESPECTFUL

Lack of consideration, courtesy,
and dignity for others

(.66)



NONINCLUSIVE

LGBTQ inequity

(.65)



Disability inequity

(.59)



Racial inequity

(.58)



Age inequity

(.44)



Gender inequity

(.40)



Cronyism and nepotism

(.40)



General noninclusive culture

(.33)



UNETHICAL

Unethical behavior

(.62)



Dishonesty

(.59)



Lack of regulatory compliance

(.44)



CUTTHROAT

Backstabbing behavior
and ruthless competition

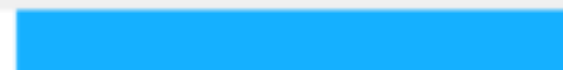
(.61)



ABUSIVE

Bullying, harassment, and hostility

(.50)



Diversity with Equity and Inclusion

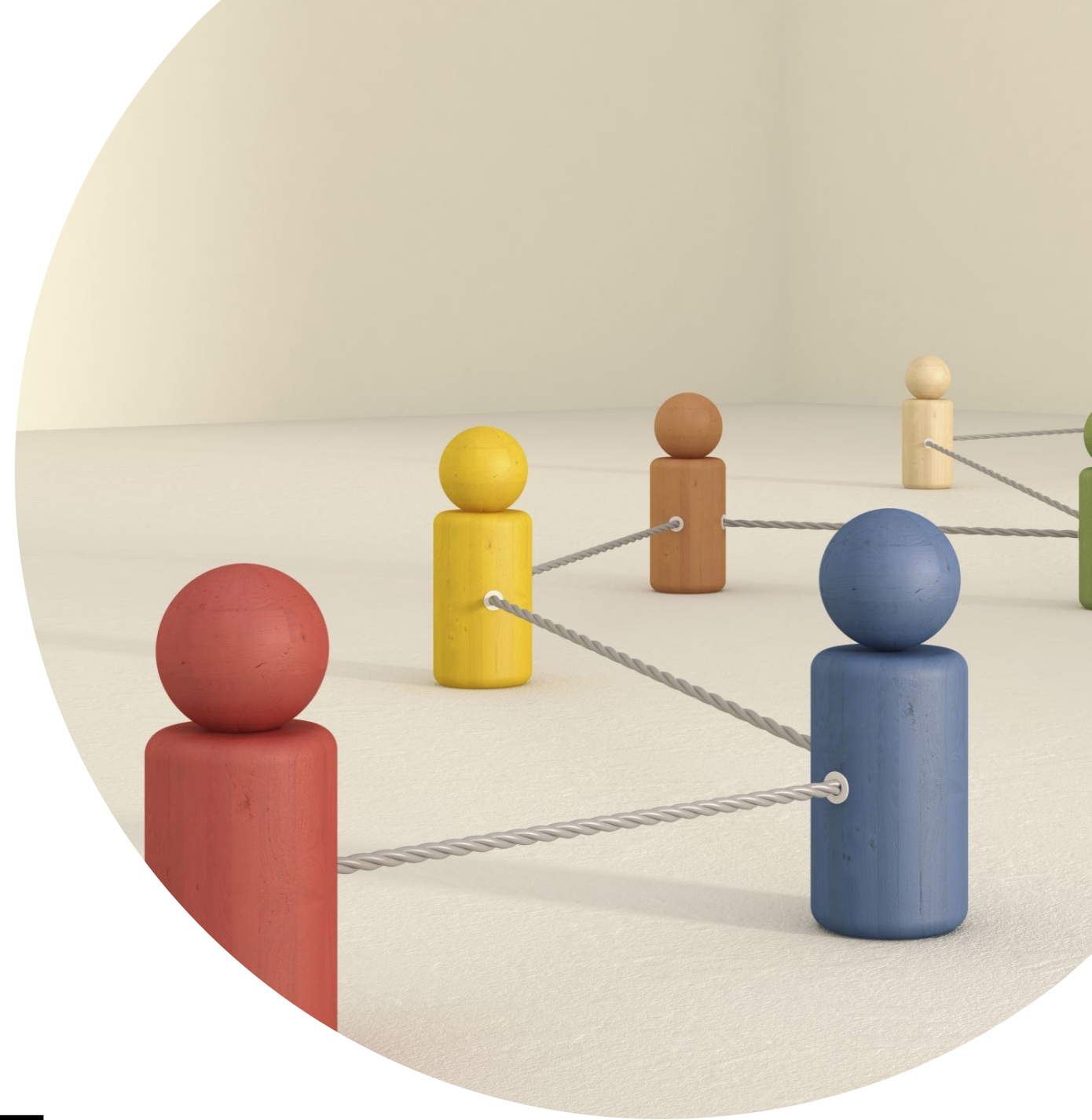
Equitable career advancement and mentorship opportunities

Fundamentally building a sense of belonging for everyone

Cultural humility

Openness to growth and feedback

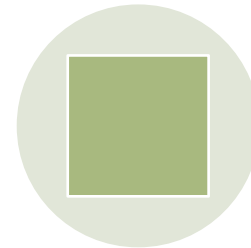
Compassion and connection as the guiding principles



Practices for difficult conversations



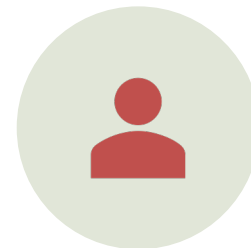
Ground in breath,
intention, compassion



Acknowledge your
emotions



Center the people most
impacted



Give yourself
permission to
participate at your level



Vulnerability/discomfort
does not equal unsafe



Allow nonclosure &
ongoing learning

Living BIG

Boundaries

- We respect each other's boundaries
- When we are not clear about what is okay and not okay, we ask
- We are willing to say no

Integrity

- Choosing courage over comfort
- Choosing what's right over what's fun, fast, or easy

Generosity

- We are generous with our assumptions

Implicit Bias

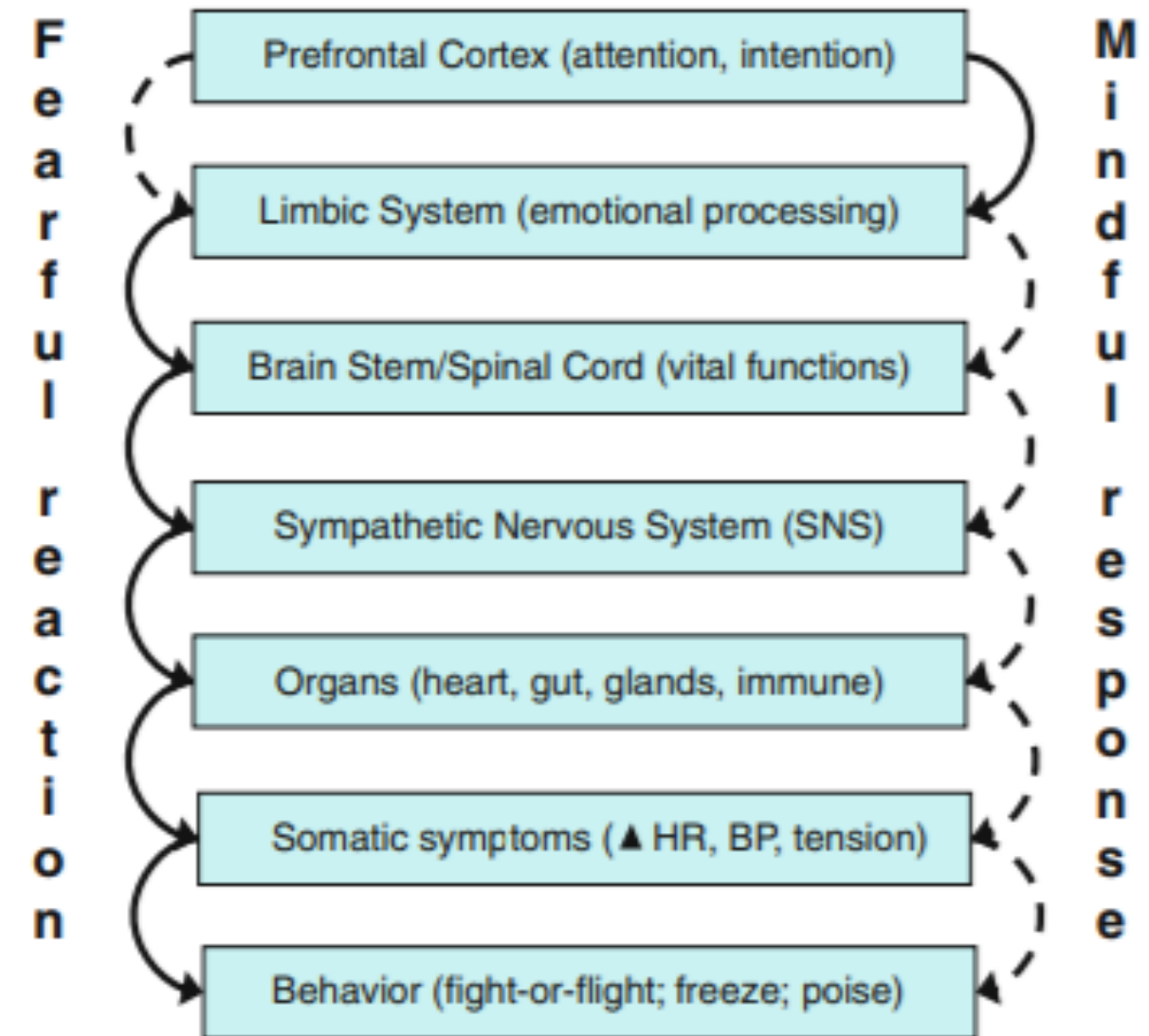
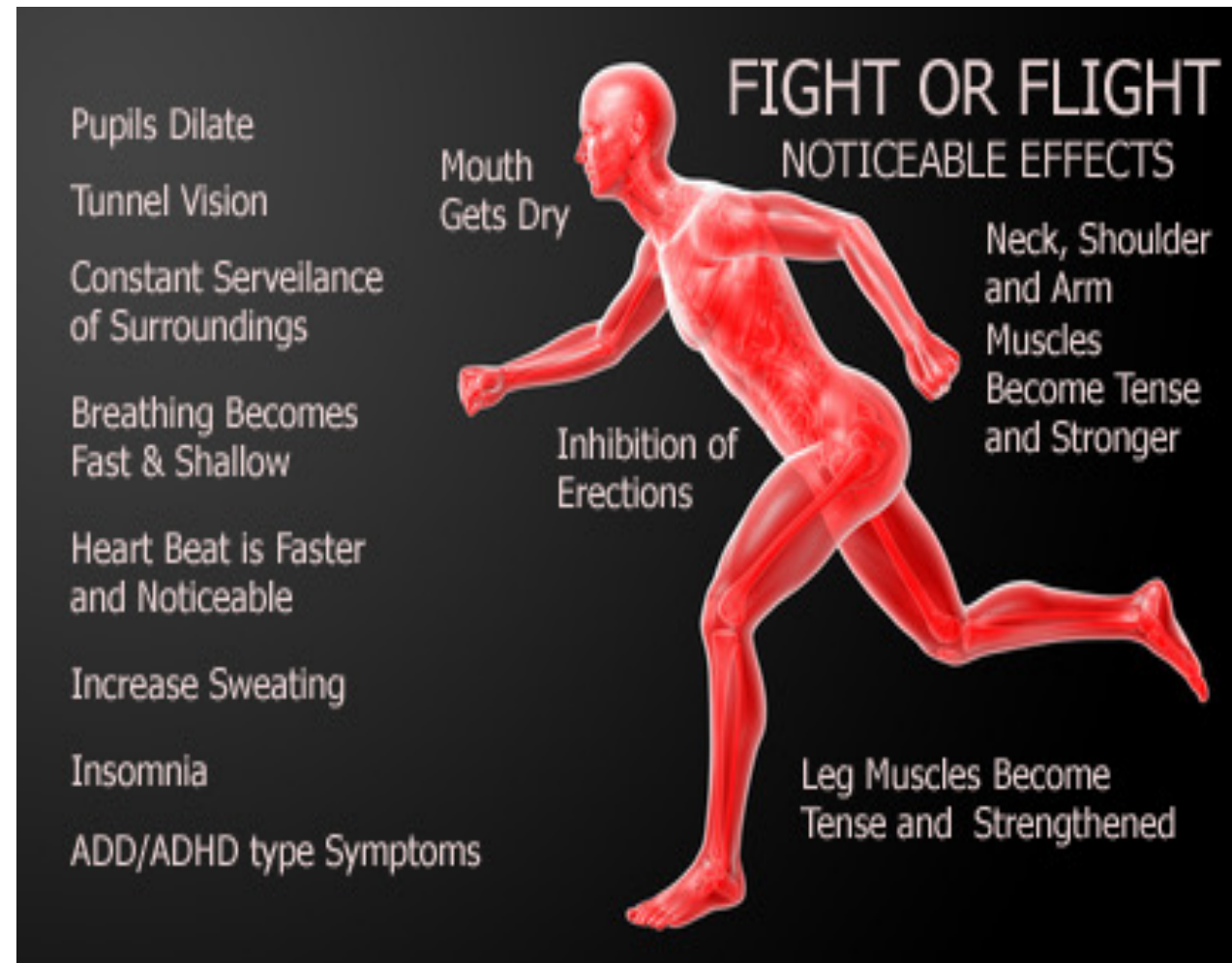
Implicit Bias

Also known as implicit social cognition, implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

Assess yourself:

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

High Stress & Implicit Bias



Nagoski and Nagoski, 2020, Burnout: The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle ; Image by Turning Within Meditation Foudation

Image by Turning Within Meditation Foudation; (Greeson & Brantley, 2009)

Microaggressions

I did a case this morning and spoke to the family after the procedure while wearing my jacket with my name, MD, and 'Chair of Surgery.' Family tells the post anesthesia care unit they haven't talked to the surgeon, so I was paged to come speak to them.

— Female surgical department chair

Microaggressions

Microaggressions are commonplace remarks, questions or actions that are painful because they have to do with a person's membership in a group that is discriminated against.

Impact of Microaggression: Racial Battle Fatigue

Increased depression, anxiety, and trauma

Increased suicidality

Correlation with increased heart attacks, hypertension, hospitalization

Mistrust in service providers

Breaking the Habit



Awareness (motivation)



Concern (Motivation)



Strategies to break the habit



Effort, practice and setbacks

Mindfulness Meditation Reduces Implicit Age and Race Bias: The Role of Reduced Automaticity of Responding

Adam Lueke¹ and Bryan Gibson¹

Abstract

Research has shown that mindfulness can positively affect peoples' lives in a number of ways, including relying less on previously established associations. We focused on the impact of mindfulness on implicit age and racial bias as measured by implicit association tests (IATs). Participants listened to either a mindfulness or a control audio and then completed the race and age IATs. Mindfulness meditation caused an increase in state mindfulness and a decrease in implicit race and age bias. Analyses using the Quad Model showed that this reduction was due to weaker automatically activated associations on the IATs.

Keywords

mindfulness meditation, implicit attitudes, implicit bias, prejudice

We are here to awaken from the illusion of our separateness.

—Thich Nhat Hanh

Mindfulness meditation focuses the individual on the present and encourages practitioners to view thoughts and feelings nonjudgmentally as mental events, rather than as part of the self. This allows the individual to understand and reflect on these events as transient moments that are separate from the self, which inhibits the natural tendency toward reaction and automatic evaluation (Bishop et al., 2004). Research regarding this process has demonstrated the unique ability of mindfulness to help assuage a number of problem behaviors. For example, mindfulness reduces food cravings for overweight and obese individuals (Alberts, Mulken, Smeets, & Thewissen, 2010; Alberts, Thewissen, & Raes, 2012; Paolini et al., 2012), improves psychological and health-related symptoms and stress (Baer, Carmody, & Hunsinger, 2012; Carmody, Reed, Kristeller, & Merriam, 2008; Ciesla, Reilly, Dickson, Emanuel, & Updegraff, 2012), and generally promotes well-being and happiness (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Collard, Avny, & Boniwell, 2008; Killingsworth & Gilbert, 2010).

In addition, mindfulness has a number of cognitive benefits, including increased working memory capacity and reduced mind wandering (Mrazek, Franklin, Phillips, Baird, & Schooler, 2013), avoidance of the sunk cost bias (Hafenbrack, Kinias, & Barsade, 2014), and increased compassion (Condon, Desbordes, Miller, & DeSteno, 2013). Mindfulness may also inhibit automatic evaluation (Bishop et al., 2004; Kang, Gruber, & Gray, 2013). For example, mindfulness reduced dieters' automatic responses to attractive food (Papies, Barsalou,

& Custers, 2012), reduced problem solvers' reliance on automatic solutions (Ostafin & Kassman, 2012), and reduced the correlation between implicit alcohol attitudes and drinking behavior (Ostafin, Bauer, & Myxter, 2012; Ostafin & Marlatt, 2008). These findings suggest that mindfulness meditation minimizes the impact and influence of past experience on the present moment, whether it is an established attraction toward unhealthy food or the tendency to use past information to solve current problems. One mindfulness practitioner stated that mindfulness increases "nonconceptual awareness" that "does not get hung up on ideas . . . or memories" (Gunaratana, 2002, p. 140). Similarly, Ostafin and Kassman (2012) state that "An aim of mindfulness is to limit the ability of automatically activated verbal-conceptual content derived from past experience to bias thought and behavior" (p. 1032). Thus, by decreasing reliance on past associations in memory, mindfulness is thought to free people to choose actions more thoughtfully and with less bias from those past associations. The focus of the current research is on the potential for mindfulness to reduce one form of automatic social cognition: implicit out-group bias. Implicit attitudes are based on the automatic association between constructs in memory (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Greenwald et al., 2002). A common method for

Social Psychological and
Personality Science
2015, Vol. 6(3) 284-291
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sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav
DOI: 10.1177/1948550614559651
spps.sagepub.com
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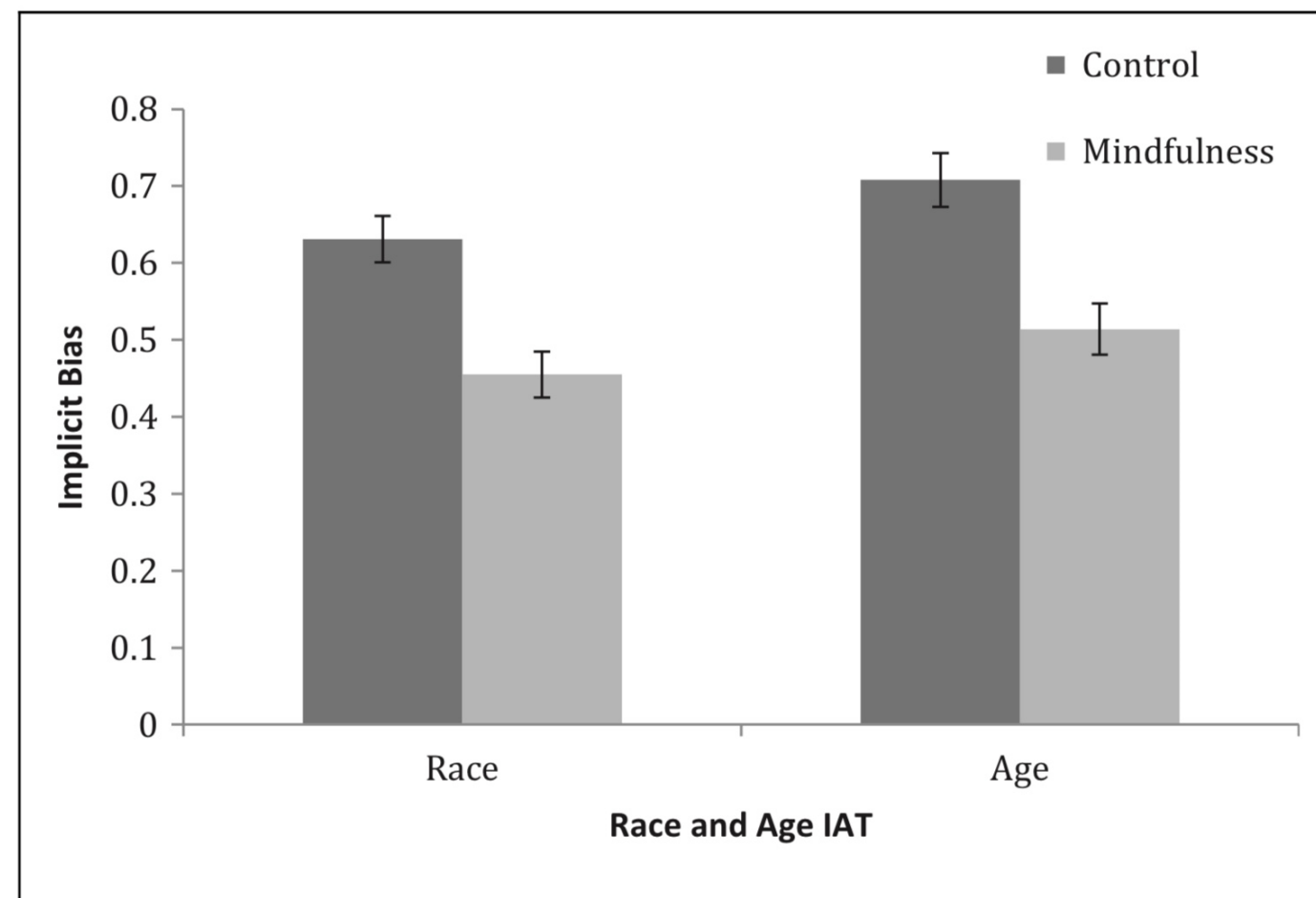


Figure 1. Implicit bias on the race and age IAT for the control and mindfulness conditions.

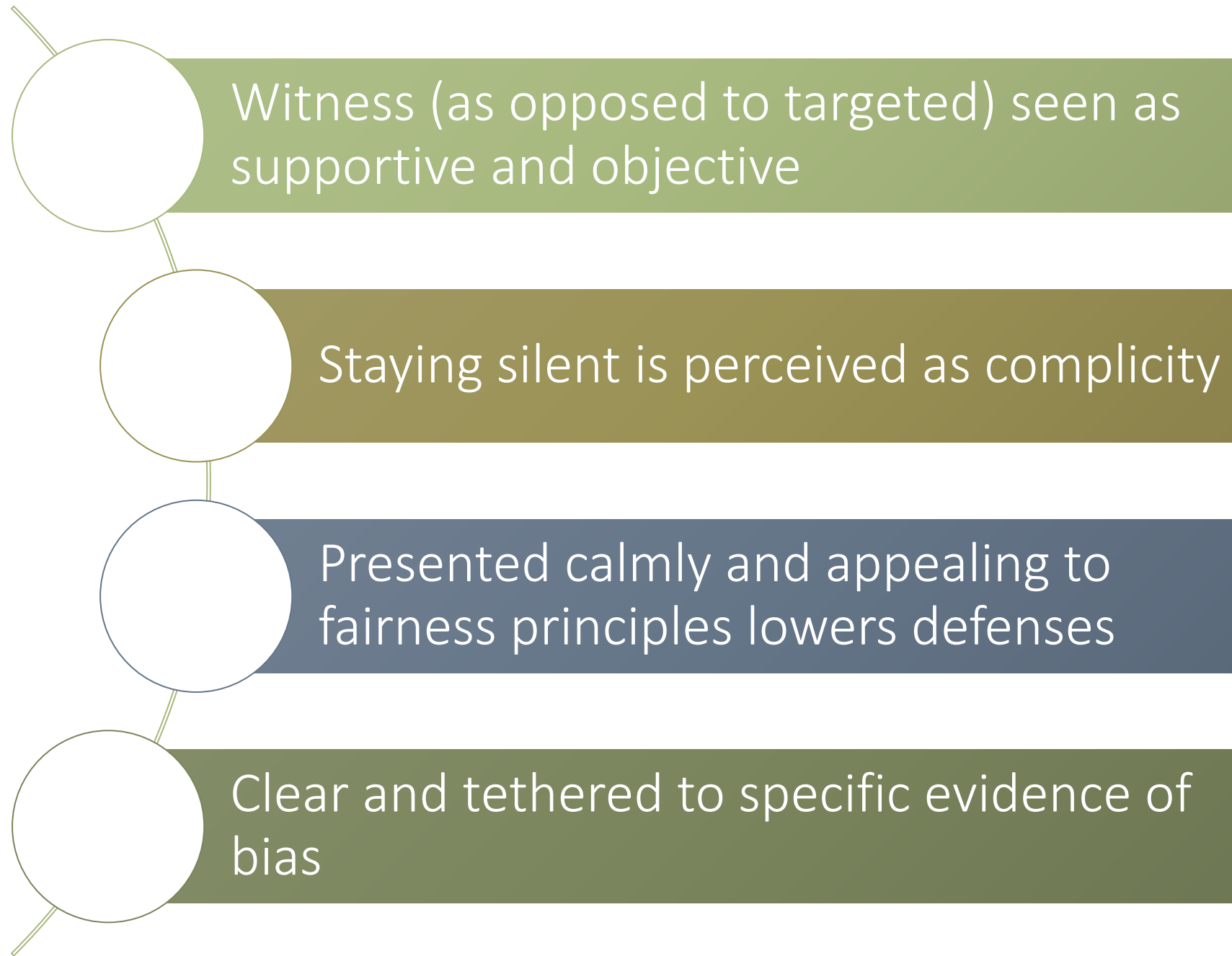
Strategy	Description
Stereotype replacement	Detecting stereotypic thoughts or media portrayals and replacing them with non-stereotypic responses
Counter-stereotypic imagery	Spending time thinking about counter-stereotypic exemplars
Perspective-taking	Imagining what it would feel like to be in the position of a member of a different group
Individuation	Gather and focus on information that makes someone an individual, rather than generalizing based on group membership
Increasing intergroup contact	Making positive, personal contact with members of stereotyped groups
Consider situational explanations for behavior	Actively consider situational explanations for behavior, rather than jumping to dispositional explanations
Modify your environment	Increase representation of underrepresented group members in your visual environment
Committing to credentials	Commit to evaluation of criteria in advance of viewing any candidate

More Evidence Based Methods for Breaking Bias

What to do
socially?

Example

Call out vs. Call in



Bias Feedback Effectiveness

Cox, W. T. L., & Devine, P. G. (2019). 12—The prejudice habit-breaking intervention: An empowerment-based confrontation approach. In R. K. Mallett & M. J. Monteith (Eds.), *Confronting Prejudice and Discrimination* (pp. 249–274). Academic Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-814715-3.00015-1>

Supporting self

Acknowledge

Take a breath. Acknowledge feelings and experience.

“I feel unseen.”

Connect

Remember community past and present

“ I am not alone.”

Support

Self kindness

“What do I need now?”

“What do I need later?”

Bystander Response

Acknowledge

“It sounds like a microaggression; I can understand you being upset.”

Connect

“Thank you for sharing with me. You’re not alone.”

Support

“What do you need right now? Let's problem solve together when you're ready.”

Acknowledging Mistakes

Acknowledge

Acknowledge impact
and emotions.
Intentions later.

“I can see what I’ve
said was hurtful”

Connect

Apologize and thank

“Sorry I said that but
thank you for sharing
with me the feedback.”

Support

Support the other and
yourself

Be committed toward
growth of self and
community

Scenario

The faculty committee is reviewing a graduate student application. A faculty member says, this is going to be a diversity candidate. You want to ask what they mean by that and have a conversation about this statement.

How might you start?

What do you hope to discuss?

What will be challenging about this conversation?

What are negative stereotypes of a diversity hire?

What are additional perspectives?

It's a long-term practice
of habit change.

Patricia Devine



Questions or Comments



Resources

online Resources

<https://accelerate.uofuhealth.utah.edu/connect/how-to-respond-with-compassion-when-someone-is-hurt-by-racism>

<https://accelerate.uofuhealth.utah.edu/connect/3-steps-to-healing-and-resistance-in-the-face-of-racism>

<https://accelerate.uofuhealth.utah.edu/explore/commit-to-confronting-the-microaggressions-that-are-affecting-your-learners>

<https://accelerate.uofuhealth.utah.edu/explore/how-to-practice-self-compassion-for-resilience-and-well-being>

<https://www.cultureamp.com/blog/how-to-help-black-employees/>

https://academicaffairs.ucsc.edu/events/documents/Microaggressions_InterruptHO_2014_11_182v5.pdf

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/03/smarter-living/how-to-respond-to-microaggressions.html>

<https://www.centerforhealthjournalism.org/2017/11/08/how-racism-and-microaggressions-lead-worse-health>

<http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/research/understanding-implicit-bias/>

Colleagues,

We thank you for your presence and engagement with the important material. Our hope is to acknowledge the impact of bias as well as normalize this reality for us as humans and Americans. If this presentation has brought up challenging emotions for you, Jamuna Jones and Jake Van Epps from the Resiliency Center are happy to speak with you in a one-on-one confidential context or provide you with resources. We understand the discomfort these conversations have and want everyone to feel supported in growing through them.