



University Equity and Inclusion

Our Beloved Community

Spring 2022 Learning Community Book Group (LCBG) Session 5

Equity and Inclusion as a Process

Suggested Reading: Habits 16 (p75-80), 17 (p81-84), 18 (p85-88), 19 (p89-92), 20 (p93-98),
and 23 (p109-114)

Conversation Guide

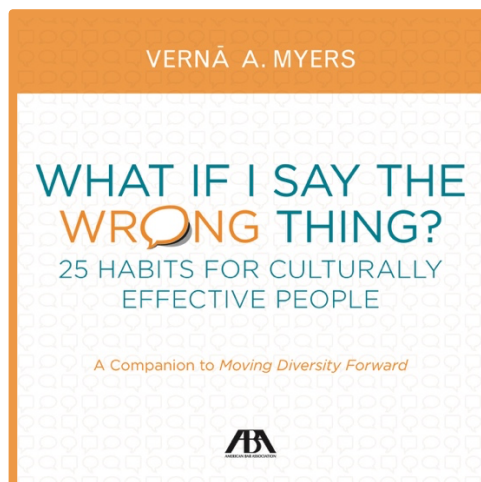


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Welcome

Welcome back to our Learning Community Book Group, a discussion group for exploring the challenges of engagement across difference and tips for positive engagement. Last week our theme related to seeing the humanity in others. No matter where we have grown up, we have been given a cultural toolkit that shapes how we see and understand ourselves and each other, and that toolkit comes into play in each of our encounters. Historical patterns of advantage or disadvantage, which are based on a vast continuum of difference, persist on a societal level, but are acted out and experienced on the individual level. The purpose of discussion was to recognize where and how we have acquired this toolkit, how it has shaped how we treat people, the ways in which our understandings of people—and the “kinds” of people—have since evolved, and to recognize the importance of the personal role we have in recognizing and demonstrating the humanity in others.

For today our theme, in this last session is equity and inclusion as a process. For discussion we suggested reading Habits 16 (Aren't You Scared To Live There If You See Something, Say Something), 17 (“I Know You Haven't Done This Before” Don't Be Afraid To Ask), 18 (Girl, I Mean, Boy, I Mean, You Know...Use Your Mistakes To Grow), 19 (Love Is Having To Say You're Sorry Learn To Apologize), 20 (Have Coffee (Or Tea) Expand Your Comfort Zone And Professional And Social Circles), and 23 (Avoid The One-Mistake Rule Apply Criteria Fairly).

Remember, the goal of this Learning Community is not for us to become **perfect** in our interactions with others; we will all say the wrong thing again at some point. However, as we work through this book, we will come to a point where we can be more mindful of others, and able to do the work of building stronger relationships and engagements *after* we say the wrong thing.

Send participants to breakout rooms.

Breakout Room Discussion Guide for Moderators

Read aloud ground rules statement.

The below ground rules statement should be read verbatim by the moderator:

“We are here together to have respectful discussions about how to engage across difference. As we move through this book, we will engage in discussions about subjects that many of us may *think* about, but are not usually comfortable *talking* about in mixed company or any company. This is intended as a supportive space for us to engage in these discussions without fear of judgment or condemnation. The University Equity and Inclusion has provided ground rules to follow, in order for us to make this a space where we can have these discussions openly and without fear. We will refer to these ground rules at the beginning of each session.”

Repost ground rules.

Copy and paste ground rules (provided just below for convenience), additional ground rules your group generated in the welcome session, and any conflict management strategies your group may have generated in the chat.

- **Keep your camera on:** Please have your camera on for as much of the meeting as possible and be ready to engage in large and small group conversations.
- **Speak only *your* truth:** Share from your own experiences and do not speak for others.
- **Seek to understand:** Actively listen before responding.
- **Respect others’ experiences:** We may have different OR similar stories to share, and contexts to draw from. All are legitimate.
- **Disagree without discord:** Disagreement is expected. However,
 - o Approach unexpected ideas with curiosity, not argument.
 - o If you disagree, debate and challenge ideas. Do not attack the speaker.
- **Share the air:** Make room for all voices to be heard, and do not dominate the conversation.
- **Confidentiality:**
 - o Share stories and experiences, but do not identify individual people or provide details that would allow someone in your story to be identified.
 - o Do not share the experiences you hear in this space, outside this space.

Paraphrase given discussion objectives.

Culturally effective, inclusive and respectful engagement is an ongoing process, not a project with a clearly-defined ‘finish line.’ No one can honestly claim to be 100% perfect in their engagements with others: even those who are committed to equity and inclusion will have moments where their well-intentioned efforts aren’t delivered as gracefully as necessary. This will be just as true for you and I, as it already has for Vernā Myers herself.

In this session, reflect on what you’ve learned in this Learning community, on the process of equity and inclusion, and on the need to use missteps as an opportunity for growth. Mistakes are not moments of failure or points of no return: we can affirm our commitment to the work of inclusion even amid bumps in the road.

Post discussion questions and objectives and moderate discussion.

Keep track of time and ask participants to spend the remaining time discussing the below question. Read the question aloud as well as posting it in the chat, and feel free to read the objective aloud as well, so that all members understand the purpose of the discussion.

Question : How have your understandings of implicit bias, inclusion, and difference, changed as you've engaged in these conversations? Has your comfort zone and the manner in which you've approached or participated in conversations outside of this group changed at all? When the opportunity has arisen, has the quality or content of your interactions with people from the many "One Up/Down" groups changed? What are you determined to do differently?

Question Objective: The purpose of this discussion is to reflect upon the conversations, challenges, and tips that you have covered throughout this process, and think about how to apply them in your engagements in your workspace and personal relationships going forward.

Reconvene, Report Out, and End Session

Participants are recalled from their breakout room to the main group for reporting out via chat and verbally.