

DAY 2: Understanding and Reflecting on Our Bias

“Worse than being less than you, is if you are perceived as a threat” - [john a. powell](#)

[We all have bias](#). Bias is a preference in favor of or against a person, group of people, idea or thing that affects our understanding, actions and decisions. But often, we are not aware of the biases that we subconsciously hold. In fact, our brains are biologically designed to make sense of the world using these quick judgments.

Research shows that years of structural and cultural constructs have deeply embedded stereotypes into our culture, and consequently into our own subconscious. For example, [according to a recent study](#), companies are more than twice as likely to call minority applicants for interviews if they submit whitened resumes than candidates who reveal their race.

But, [research also shows](#) that we can actively rewire these neural associations by being more intentional about acknowledging our biases. Although bias is automatic, with intentional effort, we can learn to change the way we think and challenge the negative or harmful biases we hold. Today's focus is on personal reflection - taking the time to uncover some of our own biases and reflecting on how we take control of these unconscious constructs.

Today's Challenge:

OPTION 1: [Listen to this Michigan Radio report on bias in the Washtenaw County judicial system](#), which found that in Washtenaw County “Black people are charged with felonies at rates between two and 29 times higher than white people charged with the same crimes.”

OPTION 2: Read [reflections from three attendees at the Blackness in America](#) dinner series held in April 2018 as a partnership between Tunde Wey, a Nigerian chef who brings people together at dinners across the country to talk about inequity and other problems facing our society, and the University of Michigan. Each reflection tells a story of wrestling with identity and confronting one's biases.

OPTION 3: Go deeper and take [Project Implicit's Hidden Bias tests](#), created by psychologists at top universities, to uncover some of your own unconscious biases. Remember, having biases doesn't make you a bad person—it only makes you human. Then, [read this article in The Atlantic on an implicit bias training program with promising results](#).

TIP: Proceed as a guest to access their library of tests and find out your implicit associations about race, gender, sexual orientation, skin tone, and other topics.

OPTION 4: Begin practicing these [nine de-biasing tactics to ensure your actions line up with your intentions](#), brought to you by [ChangeWorks, LLC](#).

OPTION 5: Have questions about the content you are engaging with during the Challenge? Want to connect with others and reflect on our shared experiences? We invite you to opt in to one or more lunch hour discussion groups hosted by [Nonprofit Enterprise at Work](#) and UWWC. [To learn more and RSVP your attendance click here.](#)

Share your reflections on today's topic on social media using the hashtag **#unitedforequity** and tag **@uwwashtenaw**.