# One of the most dangerous paradigms is the assumption that you have no biases or prejudices.

# *Everyone* has biases. We all need to examine our own paradigms to find our own hidden biases.

Instructions: Print the pages (3) in this exercise. Fill out each part as authentically and honestly as you can. You will hopefully be able to see the importance of this awareness as you begin to understand how you can both contribute to or detract from a groups potential to create synergy.

# PART 1

Think about how you classify people. Take a look at each line below. They contain some contrasting phrases about people.

Below each phrase, write whatever comes to mind and don’t take a lot of time deliberating; quick reactions are needed here. Be honest with yourself. Nobody will see this but you.

| **What do you think when you see . . .** | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Someone who has a pet cat | Someone who has a pet dog | Someone who has a pet snake |
| Lives in the city | Lives on a farm | Lives in the suburbs |
| Male nurse | Female CEO | Transgender hotel manager |
| 40-year old unmarried woman | 40-year old unmarried man | 40-year old family man |
| Likes classical music | Likes country music | Likes rap music |
| Someone with a nose piercing | Someone with a beard | Someone with tattoos |
| Very obese person riding a motor cart in a store | Female car salesperson | Male at cosmetics and fragrance counter. |

Look at your responses. Circle the boxes that have negative associations or connotations. They may indicate a hidden bias, assumption, or stereotype.

# PART 2

Read and briefly consider each phrase below. Do not spend time thinking about the statement; go with your first, quick reaction and circle “true” or “false.” There is no right or wrong. Remember, nobody will see this except you so be honest!

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| True or False | When I am selecting a doctor or dentist, I try to find a name that sounds American. | |
| True or False | I believe women are better with children than men. | |
| True or False | When I see Mexicans on a construction crew, the work will be sub-standard. | |
| True or False | When I am in a hurry, I choose the line with the younger cashier. | |
| True or False | I think people who identify LGBTQ+ are so consumed with being treated as equals,  they lose sight of everything else. | |
| True or False | I think people who are overweight are generally lazy, otherwise, they would get healthy. | |
| True or False | I think devout Christians are judgmental. They certainly don’t support diversity and inclusion. | |
| True or False | Older people are old-fashioned and don’t want to keep up with the times. | |
| True or False | I think men are generally better decision-makers. Women allow their emotions to cloud their thinking. | |
| True or False | In general, the Muslim faith is prone to violence. | |
| True or False | When I see rowdy football fans shirtless and with painted faces, I think they are of average intelligence, or less. | |
| True or False | When I am walking alone and I see a person cross to my side of the street, I consider my safety. | |
| When I see a person cross to my side of the road, does my response change depending on: | | * How the person is dressed. **Yes** or **No** * Whether the person has tattoos and piercings. **Yes** or **No** * How old the person is. **Yes** or **No** * The person’s ethnicity or race. **Yes** or **No** * Whether the person speaks to you or looks at you. **Yes** or **No** * Whether the person is female. **Yes** or **No** |

# PART 3

## You will answer these questions in Canvas when you take the quiz.

1. **Frame your bias**. Look at your responses from Parts 1 and 2.
   1. What assumptions, generalizations, or stereotypes did you make? What classifications or judgments did you make?
   2. Select one or two biases that you uncovered and write them here.
   3. Where or how do you think these biases took root?
   4. Could either or both biases be harmful or perpetuate harm to others? Why or why not?
2. **Challenge your bias**. Stereotypes and generalization drive bias, and biases can and do cause harm or perpetuate harm to others. Consider how each stereotype stands up against your values and the people you know.

Reflectively respond to these questions:

* 1. Is there room to admit that there are some people that do not fit in the bias “box” you

have created? Describe why some people fit in your “bias box” and others do not.

* 1. *Can you commit to opening your mind to challenge the biases you’ve uncovered?*
  2. If you responded “yes” to 2b, how will you challenge the biases you’ve uncovered? If you responded “no” to 2b, what will it take for you personally to challenge your thinking?

## Set your bias aside.

* 1. If you can identify that one or more biases you have could cause harm, or perpetuate harm to others, can you commit to setting these biases aside?
  2. HOW will you specifically do this?