



# THE ART OF INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION

# COMPANION LEARNING GUIDE



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CONFLICT  
RESOLUTION  
CENTER™**



## **BURST VIDEO:**

### Sources of a Leader's Power and Utilizing Humble Inquiry

Written by Dr. Toni Herndon and Lisa Maxwell

#### **REFLECT:**

*What stood out for you in the video?*

**JOURNAL:** *Consider all of the sources of social power that you have. How do you use your power to empower?*

#### **DIALOGUE WITH A TRUSTED COLLEAGUE:**

*How do we tap into our referent power more successfully? What questions demonstrate an open attitude and curiosity?*



# The ART of Inclusive Communication



We will do all we can to create a [psychologically safe space](#) for you so that you can comfortably share your experiences and perspective.

We also ask that you consider the work of Dr. Carol Dweck of Stanford University in taking the approach of a [growth mindset](#) as you participate in the sessions. While each of you is an expert, there is always more to learn!

There will be a series of four sessions:

- 1. The ARTful Conversation:** You'll learn how to effectively handle challenging one-on-one conversations. This foundational course lays the groundwork for all subsequent sessions.
- 2. The ART of Inclusive Communication:** You'll explore strategies and techniques to embrace and promote inclusivity.
- 3. The Bystander Challenge:** Respond to microaggressions and empower others to become thoughtful upstanders while creating a sense of belonging in our communities (The Bystander Challenge).
- 4. The Exchange:** You'll learn a conflict resolution process that helps you lead a problem-solving conversation, focused on collaboration and future success.

# Learning Outcomes



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**Learning Outcomes**

In this workshop, we will reinforce a **mindset of inclusiveness**.

- Reflect on our **personal histories**, our **own biases**, and our **communication style**.
- Effectively **embrace**, **listen to**, and **process diverse cultural** and **identity-related** interactions to become more **inclusive**.

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The **ART of Inclusive Communication** introduces the essential element of culture into how we communicate. Not only will we look at a few ways that cultural background impacts communication; we will reflect on our own journeys of becoming more culturally fluent.

We will also examine how the ART skills—Active Awareness, Respond Respectfully, and Troubleshoot Together—are relevant in creating a human-centered approach in managing all conversations, especially sensitive conversations around identity, culture, and race.

## GROUP AGREEMENTS

- Show respect
- Listen with compassion
- Keep confidentiality
- Share the airtime in breakouts



## FURTHER LEARNING

Inclusive language is key in successful communication in a diverse work environment. To educate oneself further in this regard, the [Inclusive Language Guide](#) is especially helpful.

# Learning Outcomes



The quote by Roger Wilkins is more than a feel-good notion; it is a profound statement that addresses the importance of an inclusive atmosphere.

## REFLECT

How do you *harness the diversity, the energy, and the creativity* of collaborators to creatively solve problems?

# Breakout Discussion

## HUMBLE INQUIRY

“Humble Inquiry is the fine art of drawing someone out, of asking questions to which you do not already know the answer, of building a relationship based on curiosity and interest in the other person.”

- Edgar Schein



### BREAKOUT

- What stood out for you about a leader's sources of power?
- How does humble inquiry relate to being an inclusive leader?

## Humble Inquiry: Types of Questions

May I ask you for an example to help me understand?

Just for my understanding, could you tell me more about \_\_\_\_\_?

Can you share with me any worries you may have about risks or any concerns you may have related to \_\_\_\_\_?

Could you please talk me through your pros and cons of your next steps?

You will have an opportunity to discuss the burst video in a small group.

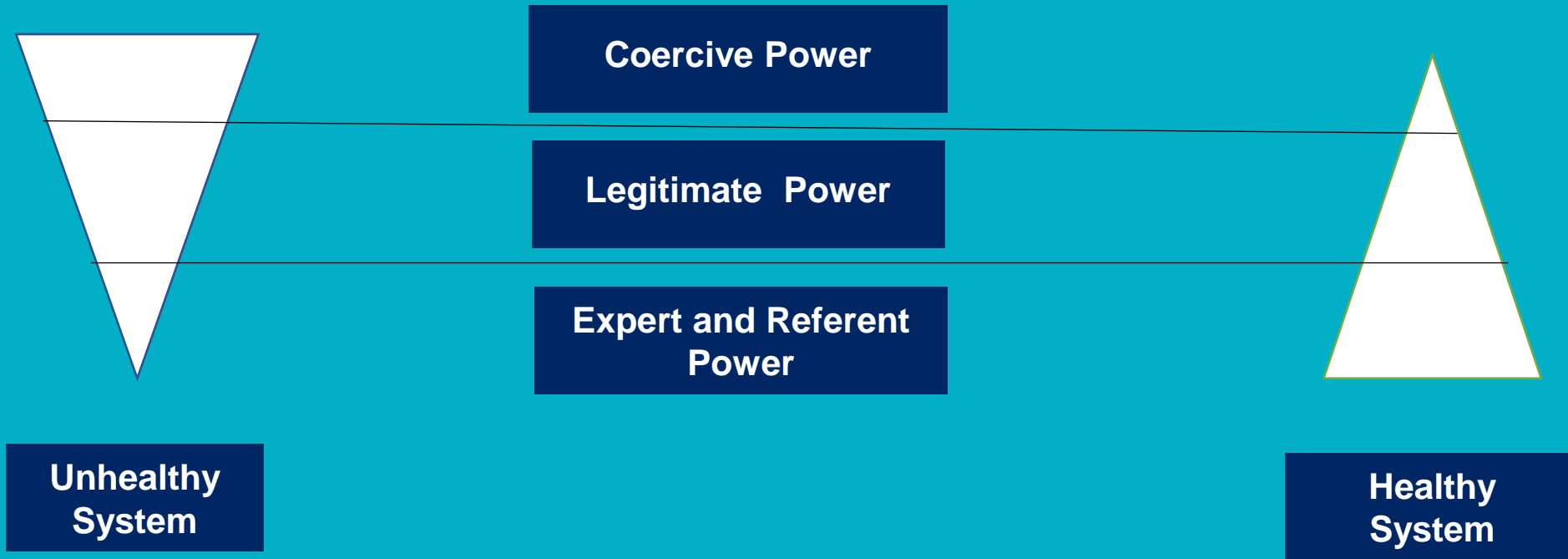
Consider your sources of power and the use of humble inquiry.

## FURTHER LEARNING

[Highlights of Edgar Schein's Book on Humble Inquiry](#)

# Power Dynamics

## FURTHER LEARNING



In the burst video, we refer to a leader's sources of power. [Learn more about the types of social power here.](#)

## Cultural Humility

A lifelong process of **continuing to learn** about, **be open** to, and be **respectful** of the **cultures** and **values** of others.

Cultural humility gives us a **greater understanding** of cultures that are different from our own and helps us **recognize** each person's **unique cultural experiences** and **expression**.

Further, it helps us **counteract the assumption** that what we are accustomed to is "**the norm**."



### BREAKOUT

- Identify one aspect of your life experience/identity/history that will help you maintain cultural humility.
- Identify one aspect of your life experience/identity/history that could be challenging as you strive to be culturally humble.

## Cultural Humility

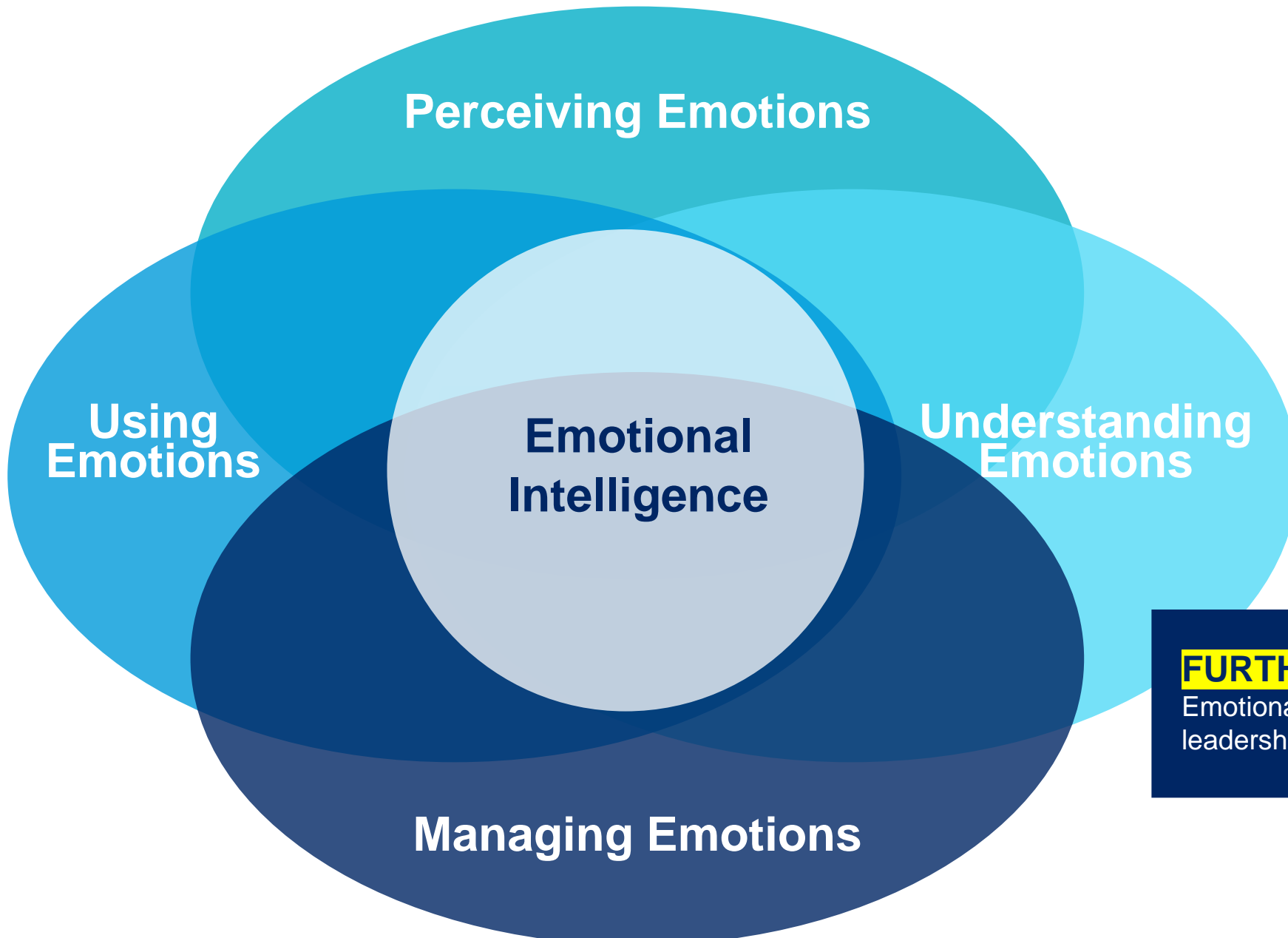
There has been an increased awareness of the need for **cultural humility** as we interact with others. It began with social workers and medical service providers realizing that they have a responsibility to their clients/patients to treat them and their cultural values with respect. It has now spread to the way we think about being inclusive. If one does not have cultural humility, how can one truly treat others with dignity? Cultural humility entails a combination of awareness, attitude, skills, practice, and lastly, embodiment. Taken from a culturally humble perspective, the ART of Inclusive Communication helps us to be more aware of our interactions with others; build skills to communicate and listen better; and, with practice, embody cultural humility.

Though geared toward health providers, **this article** contains reflective pieces to develop cultural humility.

## FURTHER LEARNING


**Cultural fluency** means familiarity with cultures: their natures, how they work, and the ways they intertwine with our relationships in times of conflict and harmony. Cultural fluency means awareness of several dimensions of culture, including communication. Adaptive leaders have competency in these three areas: emotional intelligence, cognitive agility, and cultural fluency.





**FURTHER LEARNING**  
Emotional Intelligence is key to inclusive leadership. [Learn more here.](#)

**TYPES OF COGNITIVE BIASES THAT BLOCK OUR ABILITY TO LEAD INCLUSIVELY**



**In-Group Bias**  
is the tendency to favor one's own group, particularly in reference to other groups (Dictionary of Psychology).

**Confirmation Bias**  
is the tendency to look for information that supports, rather than rejects, one's preconceptions, typically by interpreting evidence to confirm existing beliefs while rejecting or ignoring any conflicting data (American Psychological Association).

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**OVERCOMING THE IMPACT OF BIAS**

What is the benefit of being aware of your biases as a workplace leader?

What can you do to overcome the impact of in-group bias and confirmation bias?



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A workshop on inclusive communication would be incomplete without covering some aspect of bias in our presentation.

Considering confirmation bias will help us minimize preconceptions and assumptions in our work. In-group bias can prevent us from being truly inclusive with those whose backgrounds and cultural experiences are different from our own.

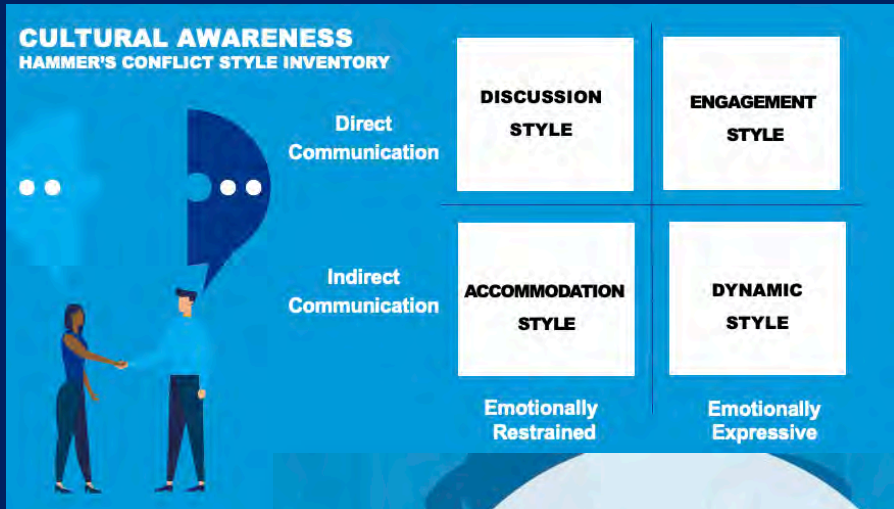
Confirmation bias forms and reconfirms stereotypes we have about people, while information that refutes our expectations is ignored. We tend to remember stereotype-consistent information and to forget stereotype-inconsistent information. This is one of the ways that stereotypes are maintained, even in the face of disconfirming evidence.

### **FURTHER LEARNING**

If you haven't taken Harvard's Implicit Association Test, you may want to do so.

Novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TED Talk The Danger of a Single Story is a compelling example of the problems with confirmation bias.

# Cultural Awareness: Communication Styles



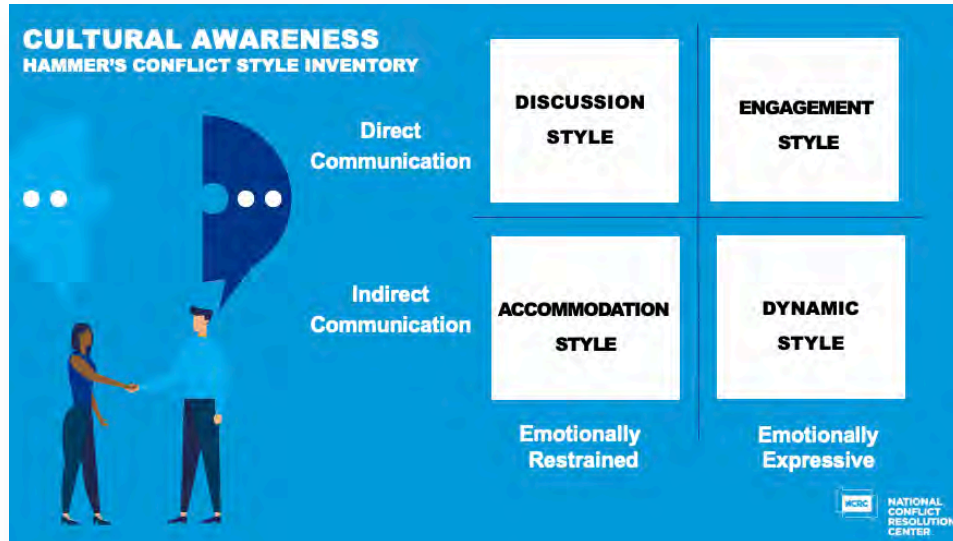
**BREAKOUT**

- What are the strengths of your style?
- How do you show respect to your style?
- How do show respect to other styles?

National Conflict Resolution Center developed this exercise based on research by Dr. Mitchell Hammer to help leaders explore differences in communication styles. Understanding your default style and being able to identify the styles of others can help to create a collaborative and inclusive environment. Being responsive to the style and needs of others is an important component of managing sensitive conversations.

Each style has its strengths; no one style is better than the others. Although we all have a default style we feel most comfortable using, as humans, we are adaptive and can sometimes fluctuate between styles based on power dynamics or situations. Recognizing that power dynamics can play a role in whether or not someone expresses their style fully, inclusive environments honor the authentic expression of individuals.

# Cultural Awareness: Communication Styles



**Discussion style** communicators tend to be verbally direct and emotionally restrained. They are clear and concise with their words and can set aside their emotions in the interest of problem-solving.

**Strengths:** direct, clear, good at problem-solving and remaining objective

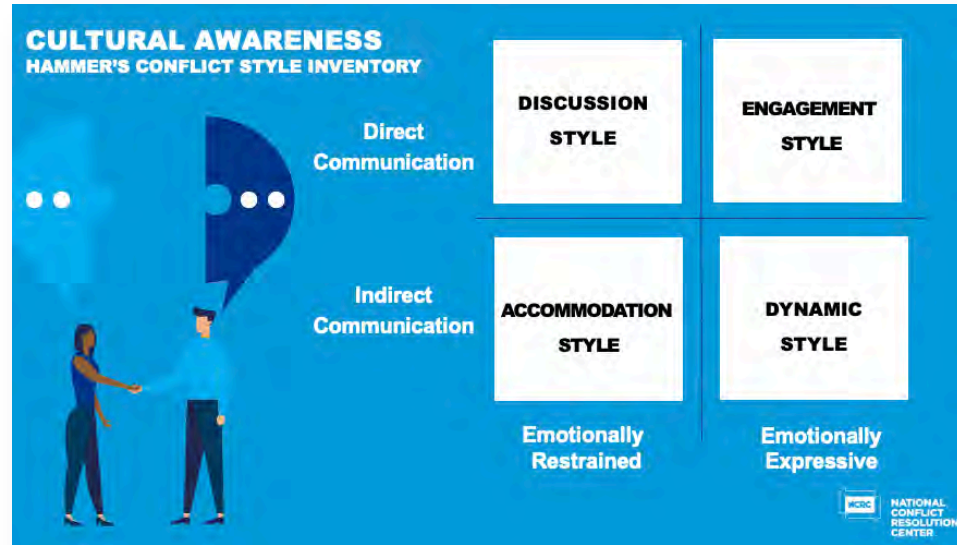
**Needs from others:** directness, logic, calmness, transparency

**Engagement style** communicators tend to be direct with their words and emotionally expressive. They value timely verbal and nonverbal expression and appreciate when others actively listen and validate their emotions.

**Strengths:** vulnerability, transparency, compassion, openness

**Needs from others:** emotional vulnerability, clear communication, openness, validation

# Cultural Awareness: Communication Styles



## REFLECT

How would knowledge of someone's communication style influence how you demonstrate that you are listening to them?

**Accommodation style** communicators tend to be indirect and emotionally restrained, which makes them the peacekeepers in relationships. During conflict, they may opt to just let the issue go, but when they choose to bring up something, they have put much thought into it.

**Strengths:** fair, observant, collaborative, unproblematic

**Needs from others:** time, boundaries, acknowledgment

**Dynamic style** communicators tend to show their emotions but are verbally indirect. During conflict resolution, they feel deeply and intuit the emotions of all involved. They need time to process their emotions before putting them into words.

**Strengths:** intuitive, allows space for all to process, thinks before they speak, observant of others' emotional well-being

**Needs from others:** space, time, patience, understanding, compassion

## INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CONTINUUM

Adapted from Bennett's Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

MONOCULTURAL MINDSET

MULTICULTURAL MINDSET



It can be useful when working with people in intercultural environments to consider your own cultural mindset and how it relates to your view on sensitive issues around identity.

### BREAKOUT

- Where would you place yourself on this continuum?
- Share a time when you were at a different place and what led to your growth.
- How do you interact with others who are at different places on this continuum?

### FURTHER LEARNING

Learn more about the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) [here](#).

The IDI is a robust assessment that measures you on a reliable intercultural development continuum. You receive two scores: one is for how you perceive yourself, and the other is for how the instrument measures you. A debrief session after the assessment helps you process this information for your continued growth.

# Tips for Interaction

## REFLECT

Others will demonstrate different mindsets about cultural awareness. Which of these mindsets would be the most challenging for you to support?

### A CTIVE AWARENESS

- ▶ Remain nonjudgmental of the other person
- ▶ Refrain from projecting your own mindset onto them
- ▶ Manage your neutrality, and check your reaction

### R ESPOND RESPECTFULLY

- ▶ Utilize questions to engage the individual
- ▶ Acknowledge emotions and experience
- ▶ Connect what they are saying to their needs

### T ROUBLESHOOT TOGETHER

- ▶ Help them gain a better understanding (not agreement) of the others' perspectives
- ▶ Focus on needs in order to collaborate comfortably despite the different perspectives



NCRC credits the Intercultural Development Inventory for its work in utilizing this continuum as a tool in understanding and promoting racial justice. We have incorporated some lessons from its approach in the framework of the ARTful Conversation. They are worth reinforcing.

The IDI focuses on ways that individuals can be supported in their growth. These are adapted for consideration by community leaders in their interactions with others. If the leader does not have formal authority over the person, we would recommend sharing your perspective in a nonconfrontational way, rather than being neutral.

# Tips for Interaction

## **A**CTIVE AWARENESS

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With **ACTIVE AWARENESS**, it is important for you, as a leader, to be aware of your own biases and reactions to the individual. Maintaining a nonjudgmental stance is important.

**RESPONDING RESPECTFULLY** to the individual entails asking thoughtful questions, remembering to use humble inquiry, and maintaining a curious stance. This is when one can acknowledge another's emotions and experiences without agreeing with that person's conclusions. As much as possible, connecting ideas to another's needs (instead of stereotypes or allowing them to disrespect others) allows you to maintain that neutral stance.

Lastly, with **TROUBLESHOOT TOGETHER**, helping the individual see that others have different perspectives is at the top of the list in order to move forward. Then you can help them see the value of collaborating with others despite their different perspectives.



# FURTHER LEARNING

## Building Inclusive Teams

### BUILDING INCLUSIVE TEAMS

FORMAL LEADERSHIP and INFORMAL LEADERSHIP
➤ Embrace Cultural Humility
➤ Utilize Humble Inquiry
➤ Recognize that Being Inclusive Takes Time and Energy
➤ Take Time to Build Relationships
➤ Thank People!
➤ Celebrate Diversity in Collaborative Meetings



### FURTHER LEARNING

Our goal in this session was to help you consider the importance of inclusive communication. As a closing thought, please [watch this video](#) by NCRS Director of Human Resources Kathryn Shade as she encourages creative ways to build inclusive teams even in our collaborative work.

# Conclusion

**The ART of Inclusive Communication**

- A Leader's Sources of Power
- Humble Inquiry
- Cultural Humility
- In-Group Bias / Confirmation Bias
- Conflict Styles
- Intercultural Development Continuum

**WHAT'S NEXT**

- Watch "How to Build Inclusive Teams" to conclude the ARTIC
- For next week, Watch "Bridging - Towards A Society Built on Belonging"
- Next week: The Bystander Challenge

**What is one takeaway for you from today's session?**



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Thank you for your participation in the ART of Inclusive Communication. We look forward to seeing you in The Bystander Challenge.



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