



CULTURE, COMMUNICATION, AND CONFLICT:

Managing Divisiveness in the Workplace



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ROAD MAP

Positive Culture with Greater Productivity



The Artful
Conversation

The Art
of Inclusive
Communication

The
Bystander
Challenge

The
Exchange

FOR
LEADERS
LIKE
YOU

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THE BYSTANDER CHALLENGE

Moving from Bystander to Upstander

Learning Outcomes

In this workshop, we will consider the topics of othering and belonging.

- Reinforce the important role leaders have in addressing microaggressions and encouraging upstanding.
- Gain a deeper understanding of the concept of bridging and the leader's role in creating belonging in the workplace.



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“**Bridging** means acknowledging our **shared humanity**, rejecting that there is a ‘them,’ and moving toward a future where there is instead a new ‘us.’”

- john a. powell

Othering and Belonging Institute, UC Berkeley



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KEY CONCEPTS IN OTHERING

- “Us vs. Them” mentality—“They” are less trustworthy and less capable than “us.”
- Seeing people only through their group or political identities without giving any thought to them as individuals.
- Negating another person’s humanity and seeing them as less worthy of dignity and respect. This is prevalent in how people with strong polarizing topics view followers of other perspectives.
- Thinking that people outside your social or political group are not as intelligent, skilled, or as special as you and your group.



OTHERING

Othering often happens in the workplace through microaggressions.

MICROAGGRESSIONS

“The everyday slights, insults, and negative verbal and nonverbal messages —whether intentional or not—that impede your ability to do your work well.”

- Melinda Epler



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COMMON MICROAGGRESSIONS POLARIZING TOPICS

- Questioning the intelligence or morality of someone based on who they voted for or what political party or candidate they support.
- Making assumptions about someone's beliefs based on their identity.
- Disregarding someone's input or suggestions because of their viewpoint/political beliefs.
- Making obviously disrespectful comments, employing a condescending tone, or using dismissive or aggressive body language.



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BREAKOUT

**Practice responding respectfully.
Each person will share an experience
when they were “othered.”**

**The other person responds
respectfully:**

- **Demonstrate Understanding**
- **Acknowledge Impact**
- **Identify Needs and Values**



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BRIDGING AND BELONGING



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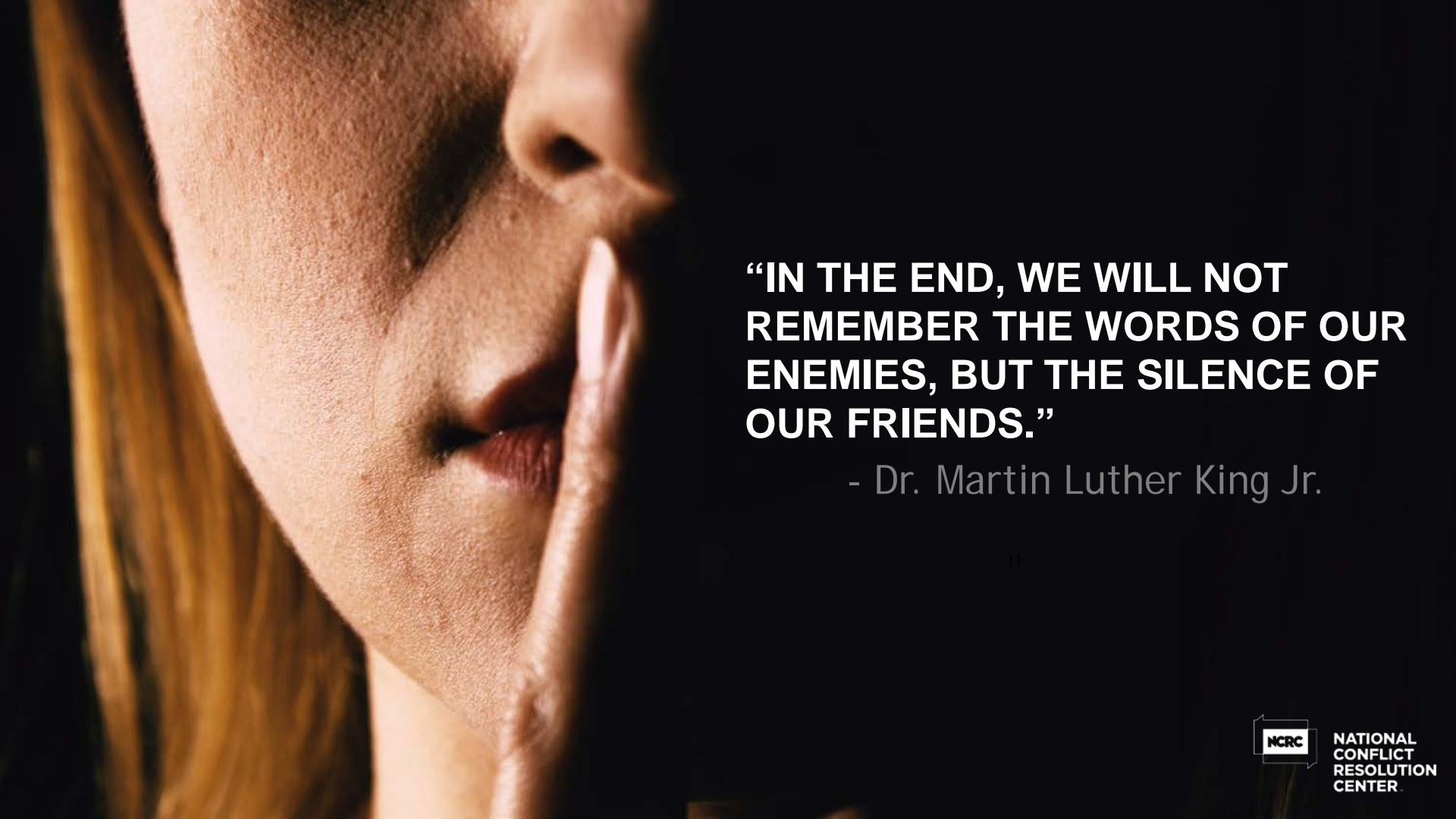
The background of the slide is a blue-tinted photograph of several people in a meeting. Some are standing and looking at a screen, while others are seated. The image is slightly blurred and serves as a backdrop for the central white circle.

BREAKOUTS

- **What stood out for you in the video from the Othering and Belonging Institute?**
- **What are your greatest in helping employees brconcerns/fears idge despite their differences on hot topics?**



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**“IN THE END, WE WILL NOT
REMEMBER THE WORDS OF OUR
ENEMIES, BUT THE SILENCE OF
OUR FRIENDS.”**

- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

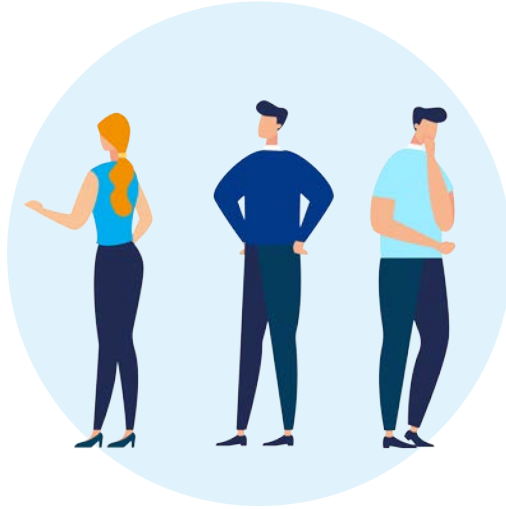


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TYPICAL INEFFECTIVE RESPONSES



Accommodate



Avoid



Attack



BYSTANDERS
+ ACTION

= UPSTANDERS
+ A Sense of Belonging



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WHAT MOTIVATES UPSTANDER ACTION?

Environmental Conditions in Department

- Psychologically safe environment
- Expectation of being supported
- Positive workplace culture

Personal Qualities of the Employee

- Empathy for others
- Sense of empowerment to take action
- In touch with personal values; a sense of moral conviction



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FOUR EFFECTIVE RESPONSES

In the Moment

DISTRACT
DIRECT

After the Incident

DELEGATE
DIALOGUE



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EFFECTIVE RESPONSES IN THE MOMENT

DISTRACTION

The upstander diverts attention to interrupt or defuse the situation.

DIRECT

The upstander communicates something directly to the person responsible but does not attack that person.



Cautions When Using the Direct Approach

- It is **imperative** that **leaders make a direct statement** in the moment. By not doing so, they are demonstrating complicit agreement with the statement, microaggression, or action taken.
- Formal and informal leaders need to be aware of their **tone** when making a direct statement. An overly aggressive tone creates a psychologically unsafe space for everyone in the group.



EFFECTIVE RESPONSES AFTER THE INCIDENT

DELEGATE

The upstander decides that the best person to intervene is someone else. They delay action until they can request that person to take action.

DIALOGUE

The upstander has a private, respectful conversation with the person responsible. The upstander is nonconfrontational, shares their own values around how people are treated, and considers the other person's perspective.

DIALOGUE WITH THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE

- ▶ Opening the Conversation
- ▶ Clarifying Your Concern
- ▶ Closing the Conversation





BREAKOUTS

Dialogue with the Person Responsible: One person will be the manager and the other person will play Dara.



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The Role of Leaders

Bridging to Create Belonging in the Workplace



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CREATING BELONGING IN THE WORKPLACE

Workplace leaders today have an unparalleled opportunity to foster an environment of belonging, despite political and other divisions.



“People will typically be more enthusiastic where they feel a sense of belonging and see themselves as part of a community than they will in a workplace in which each person is left to his own devices.”

- Alfie Kohn, American Education and Parenting Expert



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BREAKOUTS

- **Share specific ways that you have created a sense of belonging at work.**
- **What are additional actions you can take?**



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CREATING BELONGING IN POLITICALLY CHARGED TIMES

Encourage opportunities for employees to engage outside of work.

Host roundtable discussions, anonymous surveys, and other formats that encourage open communication and feedback from employees.

Build shared identities around apolitical interests, such as corporate volunteering.

Ensure that all team members feel respected and valued.

Focus on common goals.

Create safe, highly structured dialogue opportunities.



THE BYSTANDER CHALLENGE

Othering
Encouraging Upstanding
Bridging and Belonging

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

WHAT'S NEXT

- Watch video on Stage One
- Next Week: The Exchange



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