CULTURE, COMMUNICATION, AND CONFLICT:

A Certificate Program for Educational Leaders Navigating Today's School Environment

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

Group Agreements

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

NCRC

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 educational 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 schools..

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

“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
NCRC
NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

KEY CONCEPTS IN OTHERING

- “Us vs. Them” mentality –“The others” are less trustworthy and less capable than “us.”
- Seeing people only through their group identities (e.g., racial, ethnic, linguistic, political) 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 beliefs about polarizing topics view those with different opinions.
- Thinking that people outside your social, political, or identity group are not as intelligent, skilled, or special as you and your group.

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER™

OTHERING

Othering often happens in schools (and other places) 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

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER™

COMMON MICROAGGRESSIONS

- **Making assumptions about an individual's background or about their beliefs because of their identity.**
- **Questioning the legitimacy of someone's position or qualifications.**
- **Disregarding someone's input, suggestions, or point of view because of their identity.**
- **Backhanded compliments.**
- **Questioning the intelligence, competence, or morality of someone based on their political beliefs.**
- **Assessing behavior and responding differently based on a student's identity.**

NOTE: Microaggressions can happen to anyone, but the reality is that microaggressions are done more frequently to BIPOC and LGBTQ+ individuals, and women.

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

BREAKOUT

Practice Responding Respectfully. Each person will share an experience of when they were “othered.”

The other person responds respectfully:

- **Demonstrate understanding**
- **Acknowledge impact**
- **Identify needs and values**

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

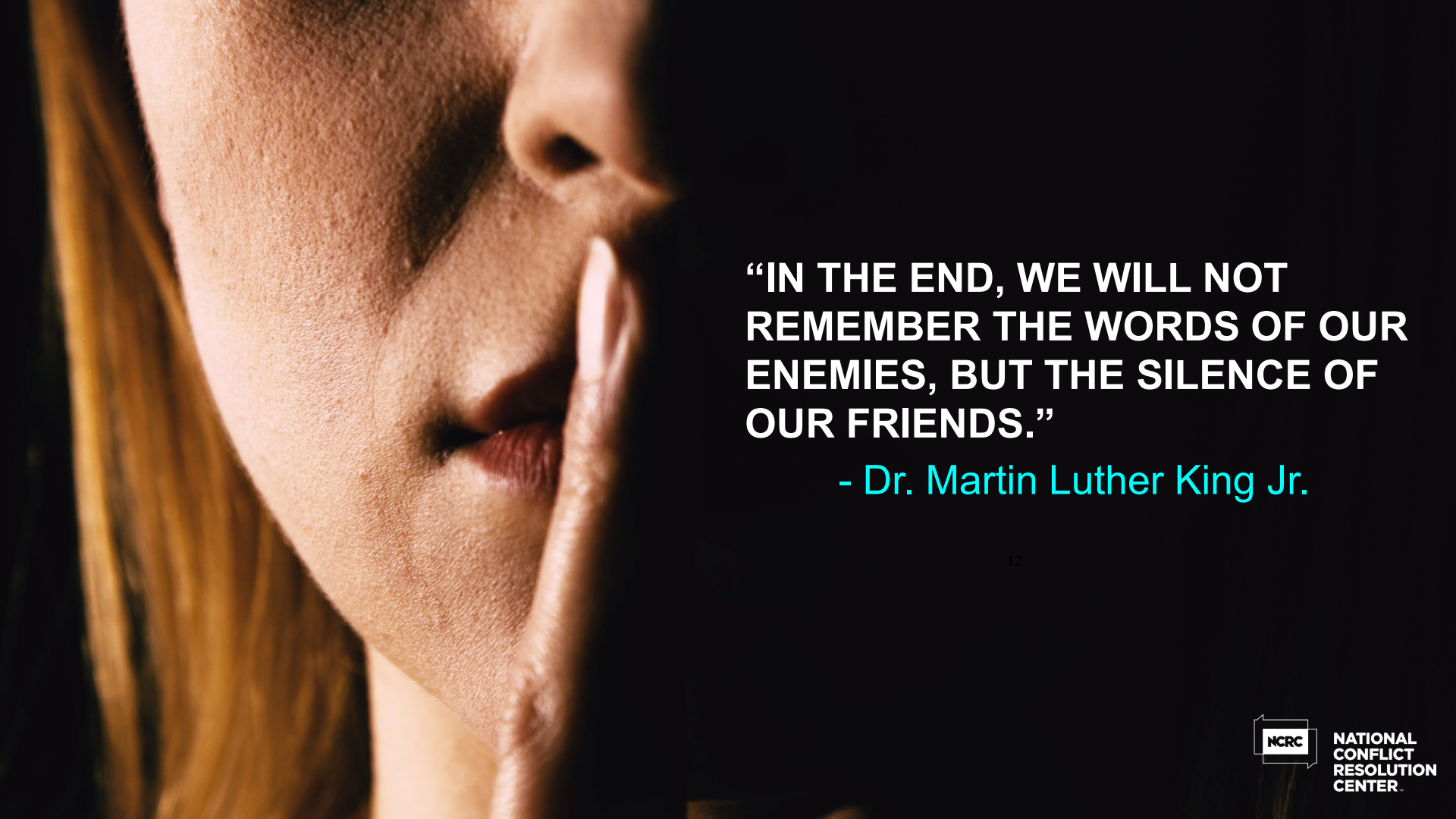
BRIDGING AND BELONGING

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

BREAKOUTS

- **What stood out for you in the video from the Othering and Belonging Institute?**
- **What are your greatest concerns in helping the people in your school community "bridge" despite their differences? What impediments might exist?**

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER



NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

TYPICAL INEFFECTIVE RESPONSES

Accommodate

Avoid

Attack

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

BYSTANDERS
+ ACTION
= UPSTANDERS
+ A Sense of Belonging
NCRC
NATIONAL
CONFLICT
RESOLUTION
CENTER

WHAT MOTIVATES UPSTANDER ACTION?

Environmental Conditions

- 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

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

FOUR EFFECTIVE RESPONSES
In the Moment
DISTRACT
DIRECT
After the Incident
DELEGATE
DIALOGUE
NCRC
NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER™

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.

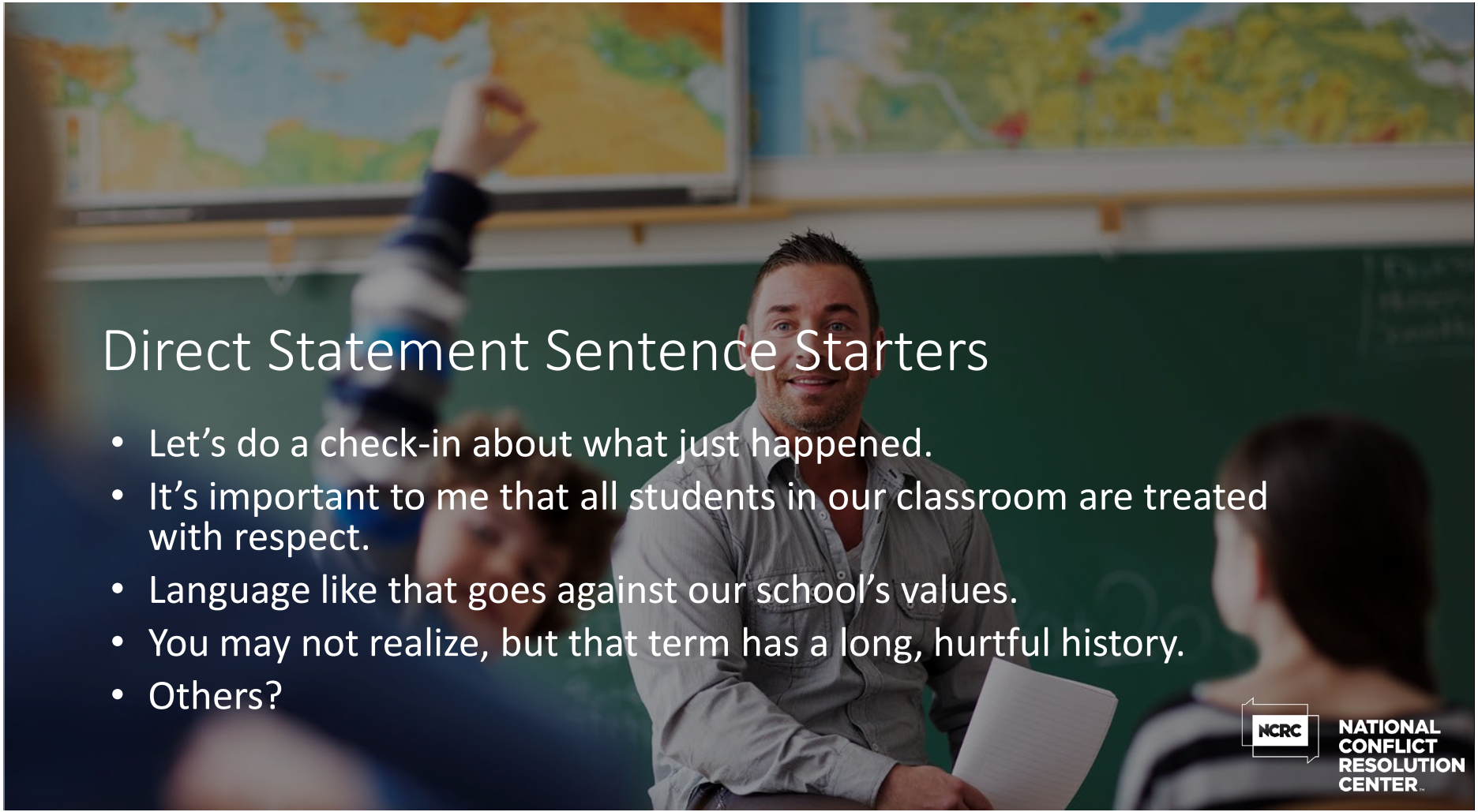
NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

CAUTIONS WHEN USING THE DIRECT APPROACH

- It is imperative that educational 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.

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER



Direct Statement Sentence Starters

- Let’s do a check-in about what just happened.
- It’s important to me that all students in our classroom are treated with respect.
- Language like that goes against our school’s values.
- You may not realize, but that term has a long, hurtful history.
- Others?

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER™

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.

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

DIALOGUE WITH THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Opening the Conversation
Clarifying Your Concern
Closing the Conversation
NCRC
NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

BREAKOUTS

A student shares with you that one of their group members has been committing microaggressions against another group member because of their race, belittling their experience, questioning their contributions, etc.

How would you have a dialogue with the student responsible to discuss the concern?

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

THE ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

Bridging to Create Belonging in Schools and Communities

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

CREATING BELONGING ON CAMPUS

Educational 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

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

BREAKOUTS

- Share specific ways that you have created a sense of belonging in your district, school, classroom, and/or community.
- What are additional actions you can take?

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

CREATING BELONGING IN DIVIDED TIMES

- Encourage opportunities for colleagues to engage outside of work and students to connect outside of class.
- Host roundtable discussions, anonymous surveys, and other formats that encourage open communication and feedback.
- Build shared identities, such as through clubs and volunteering.
- Ensure that all team members feel respected and valued.
- Focus on common goals.
- Create safe, highly structured dialogue opportunities.

NCRC NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER

THE BYSTANDER CHALLENGE

Othering

Encouraging Upstanding

Bridging and Belonging

What is one takeaway for you from this session?

WHAT'S NEXT

- **The Exchange**

NATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION CENTER