

FACULTY OF LAW: WHY DIVERSITY AND EQUITY MATTERS TO YOU

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Agenda

- I. Take a Moment Exercise
- II. Introduction and Agreements
- III. Defining Diversity and Equity
- IV. Being an Ally
- V. Common Detours

Who Am I?



- Director of Diversity and Equity at University of Toronto in Scarborough → Director of Human Rights at Ryerson
- Human Rights Lawyer - common and civil law at McGill
- Attended Princeton University for my Master degree
- Worked at Deloitte as a consultant in finance
- Worked for the United Nations in Senegal, Geneva and Colombia in the field

Agreements

- ✓ Stay engaged
- ✓ Speak your truth
- ✓ No guilt, no blame
- ✓ Experience discomfort
- ✓ Expect and accept non-closure
- ✓ Respect confidentiality

(Adapted from *Courageous Conversations*

by Glenn Singleton and Curtis Linton)

From: Tana Turner



Let Yourself Be Uncomfortable

Take a Moment to Consider



After that, in pairs, talk about what you found helpful and/or challenging about this exercise

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If you had to add an example, what would you add to this sheet?



WHAT IS DIVERSITY?

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- Diversity simply means difference

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- Diversity simply means difference
- The way we use it: Diversity is the concept that differences are good - variety and differences of human experiences and identities

WHAT IS DIVERSITY?



- ❑ The concept that differences are good - variety and differences of human experiences and identities
- ❑ **Power** has resulted in the exclusion and devaluing of people based on:
 - Ethnicity
 - Sex and Gender
 - Physical abilities
 - Work experience
 - Educational background
 - Marital status
 - Faith or religion

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 - Accent
 - Geographic Location
 - Citizenship
 - Marital Status
 - Mental Health

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 - Marital Status
 - Mental Health
 - Body image

Class



- ❑ Money, social position → power
- ❑ Think about the neighbourhoods we grow up in
 - same socio-economic status
- ❑ Examples
 - ❑ Signifiers: Brands and cars
 - ❑ Orientation chats
 - ❑ Cleaning staff

Class



How does class play out in the faculty of law?

Why Does this Matter to You?



- We are now expected to acknowledge difference, reach past stereotypical judgments, and welcome the strengths and perspectives that everyone offers
- We want everyone should feel safe here
- Fostering diversity and valuing equity builds community

Post Truth

Source: Oxford Dictionaries

post-truth

adj. Relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief:

'in this era of post-truth politics, it's easy to cherry-pick data and come to whatever conclusion you desire'

'some commentators have observed that we are living in a post-truth age'

PA

Why Does this Matter to You?

- In law school or any community: people need to feel that they belong and that they are valued in order to thrive
- In legal work: we treat people differently based on differences we perceive and biases that we may have around these differences
 - ▣ Outcomes are different
 - ▣ Livelihood, Housing, Life

How we Perceive People Changes the Outcome



Six Photographer Meet the Same Man

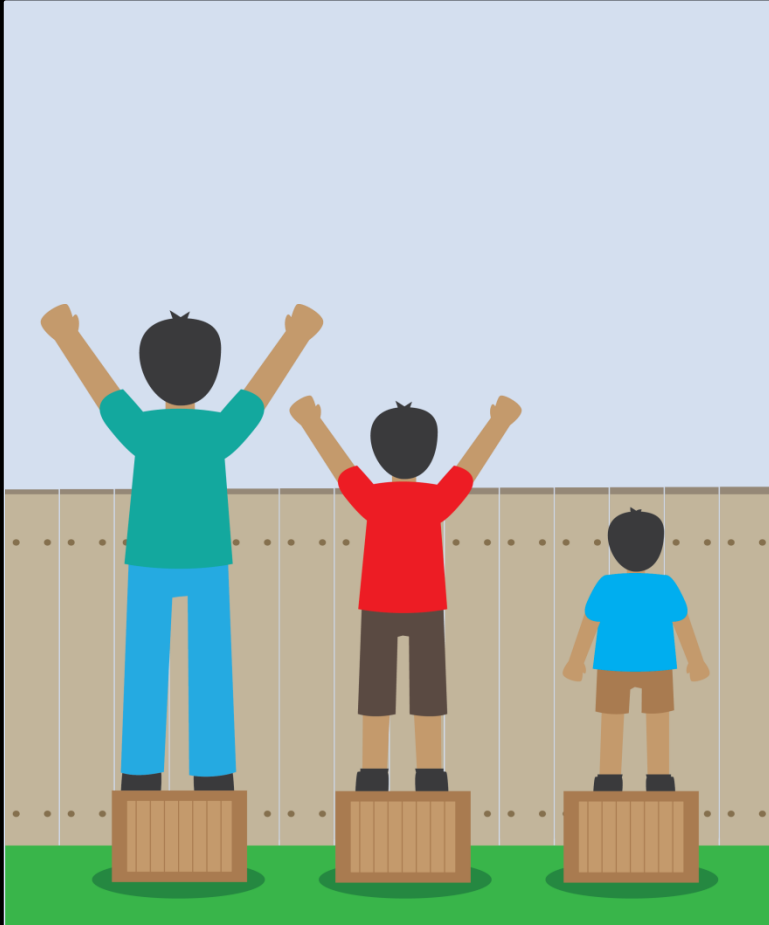
<http://mostexcitingplanet.com/six-photographers-each-have-a-photo-session-with-the-same-man-the-results-will-definitely-surprise-you/>

Who Am I?

- Director of Diversity and Equity at University of Toronto in Scarborough - grew up in Etobicoke, public housing
- Human Rights Lawyer - common and civil law at McGill – started as an activist, worked in shelters and community orgs
- Worked at Deloitte as a consultant – but in the evenings, I founded two NGOs looking to engage youth
- Worked for the United Nations in Senegal, Geneva and Colombia in the field - with refugees, my father was forced to leave Tanzania, I learned French because of great public education

Defining Equity

Equality



Equity



Some Distinctions

Equity

Fair, inclusive,
and respectful
treatment of
all people



Diversity

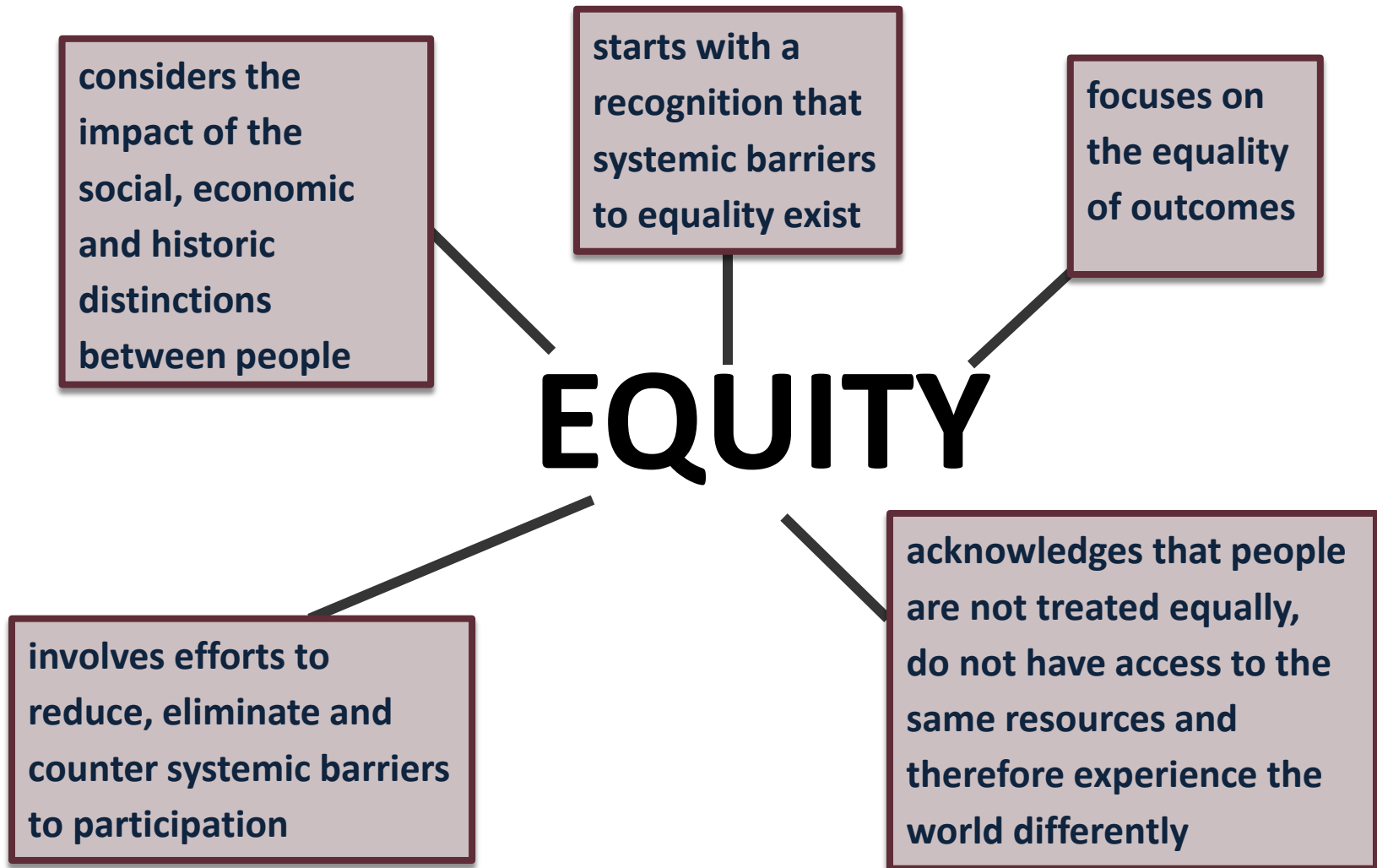
The mix



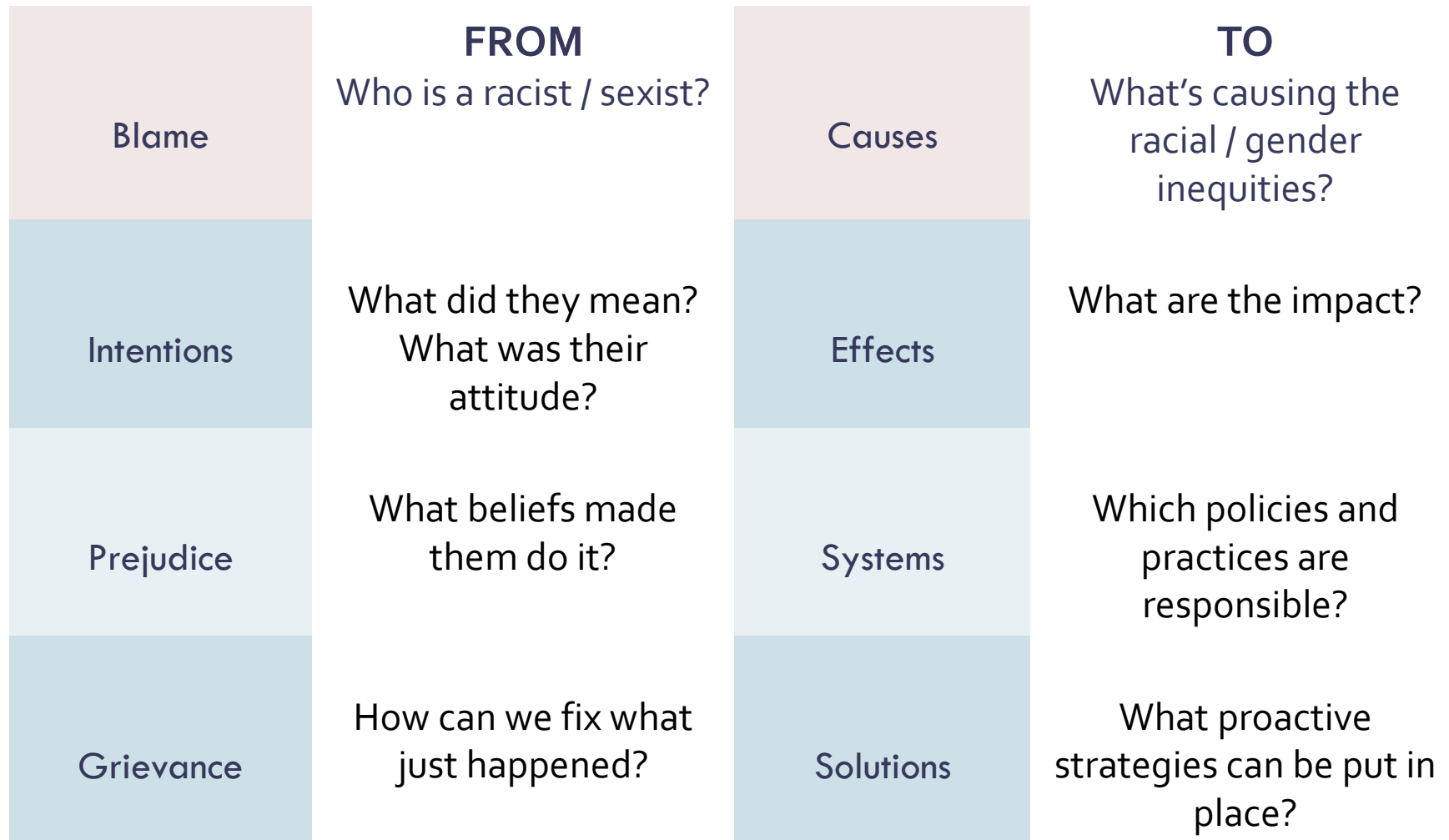
Inclusion

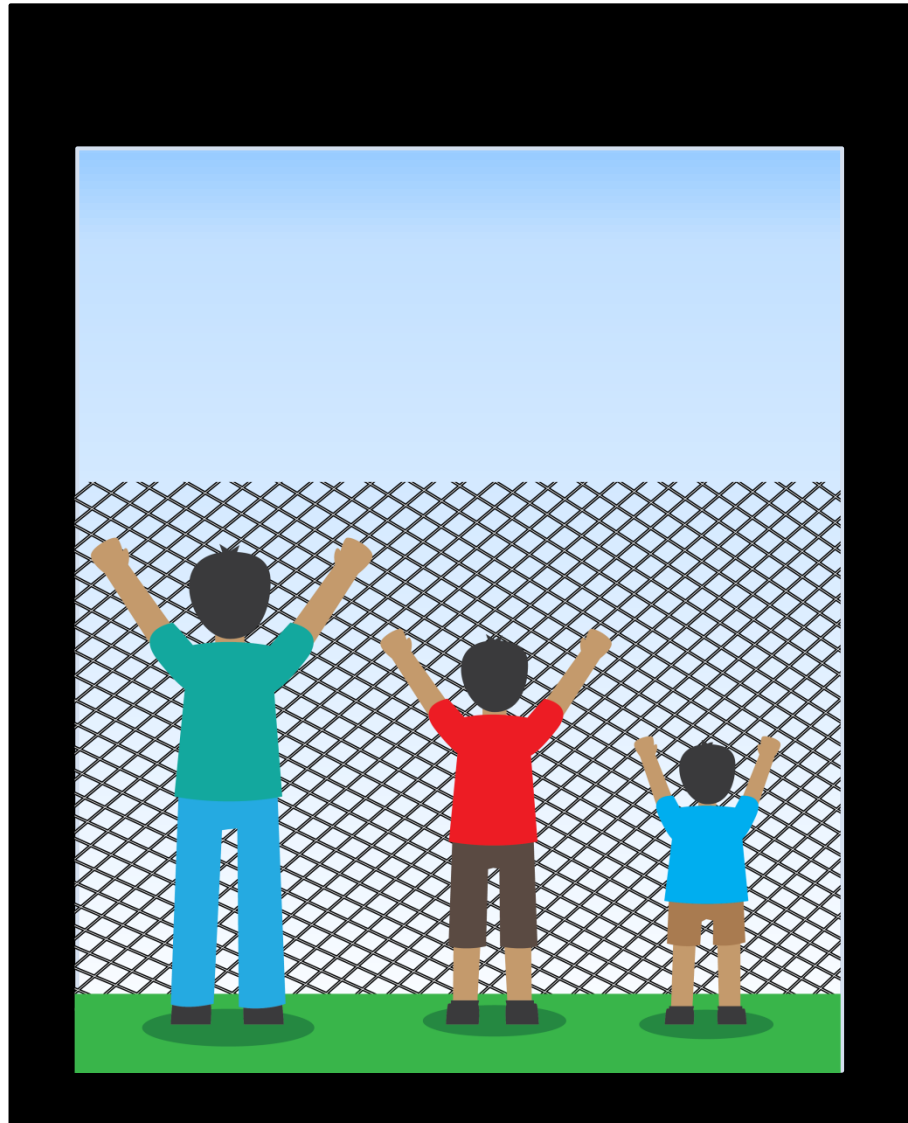
Making the
mix work

Defining Equity



Asking Different Questions to Get at Systemic Discrimination and Injustice





What Does it Mean to be an Ally?

- ❑ Acknowledges one's own privileges
- ❑ Speaks *up* but not *for* individuals
- ❑ Educates oneself about others' experiences
- ❑ Accepts that making mistakes is part of growth
- ❑ Addresses discriminatory statements/behaviors
- ❑ Understands that one person's ally is not automatically another person's ally
- ❑ Works for acceptance and inclusion, not just tolerance and tokenism

Common Detours



- I'm colour-blind
- BWAM? But What About Me?
- The pool just is not there – ignores the system
- Look how far we have come