

JUNE 2021



STAFF NEWSLETTER



Hello everybody!

This month's newsletter will focus on **"Building Awareness."**

A large part of Diversity and Inclusion, and Accessibility work is building awareness even before we can set an intention. We hope to do that through sending information, training, and having open conversations.

Recognizing an issue and building awareness and becoming educated on a topic are the first steps in almost any sort of healing and resolution.

If you are interested in learning more about any Diversity and Inclusion topic, reach out to Eric, and he will help find resources and training opportunities for you!



Where would you plot yourself on these axes?

Building Awareness

Building awareness is not the same as educating yourself on a topic. Building awareness includes a lot of education, yes, but it also includes a lot of **reflection** and **learning about yourself**. Here are some resources and some steps to help build your awareness.

First, learning the **history** of a people can really help understand the relationships amongst other groups today and various points of view. This educational piece also helps broaden your perspective and build your empathy. Basically, try to put yourself in someone else's shoes!

Last month's newsletter looked at **unconscious bias**. Examining your attitudes and perceptions is another very important piece in building awareness. Beyond looking at what your beliefs are, looking deeper to determine **WHY** you hold certain beliefs is important. What created your biases, both conscious and unconscious? Consider how you grew up and the beliefs of those around you.

Beyond your own attitudes, how does your culture and social categorization (race, sexuality, gender, socio-economic status) impact your relationships and interactions with those who are different from you and with yourself? I recently took a course: [Gender Based Analysis+](#) from the Government of Canada. One key lesson was "**intersectionality**" and the importance that all of us have complex identities and many things that impact our worldviews.

Then finally, do you want to be aware? Are you willing to make a commitment to increase your understanding of others and yourself? [FastCompany](#), an online business magazine, outlined four main types of people's awareness in Diversity and Inclusion, as represented in the matrix on page 1. Take some time to review this: decide which you think you are; which you'd like to be; and more importantly, how you'll get there!

So, when you encounter a new situation, ask yourself the following:

1. How do I feel about this?
2. Why do I feel this way?
3. Where did I learn this opinion?
4. How would I feel in that situation?
5. What can I learn about this situation/people?
6. Where do I want to go from here in my awareness?

Good luck on your journey!



June Special Awareness Days

All Month: Indigenous History Month; Pride Month

Ending June 6: National AccessAbility Week

June 20: World Refugee Day

June 21: National Indigenous Peoples Day

June 27: Canadian Multiculturalism Day