

# Inclusive Engagement Practices With Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

Presented by  
Homeless Health Care Los Angeles



# Learning Objectives

- Understand Implicit Bias and homelessness
- Explore how stigma prevents inclusive engagement and community building with people experiencing homelessness
- Understand Harm Reduction, Overdose prevention and safety practices
- Discuss de-escalation strategies as related to crisis intervention and community care

# *Outline of the Day*

**Use this to highlight key points and your important take-aways from each section throughout the training.**

Perception & Bias



Stigma & Harm Reduction

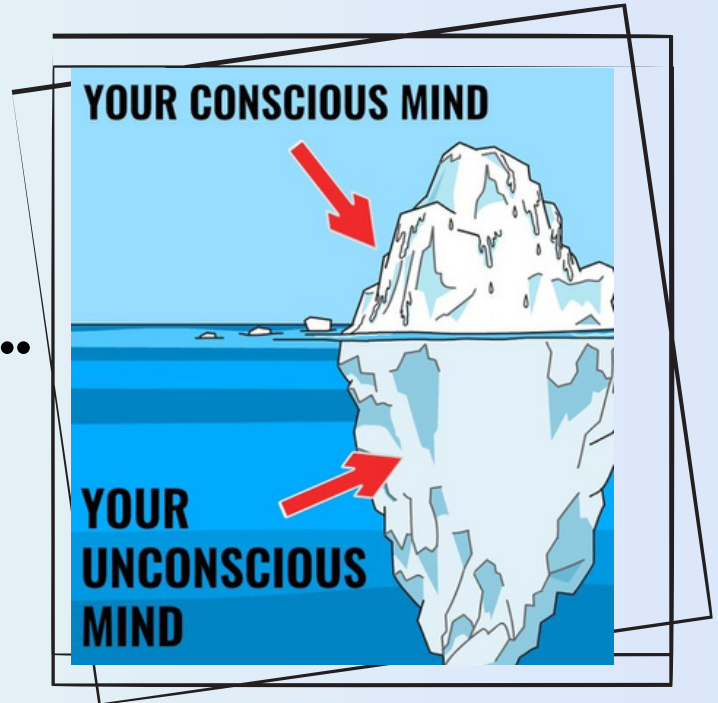


De-Escalation & Crisis Intervention



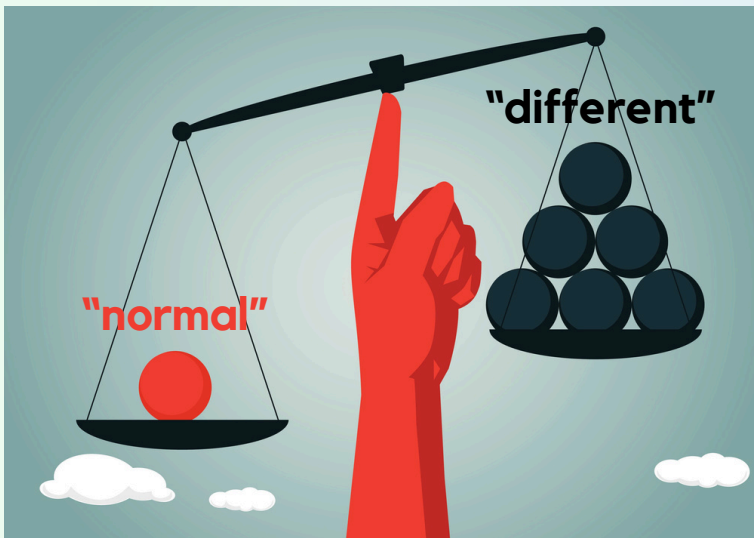
# Explicit Vs. Implicit

**Explicit Bias:** Attitudes and beliefs we have about a person or group on a *conscious* level. These are controllable and intentional.



.....

**Implicit Bias:** An unconscious association, belief, or attitude toward a person or social group. These are unintentional and often unrecognized.



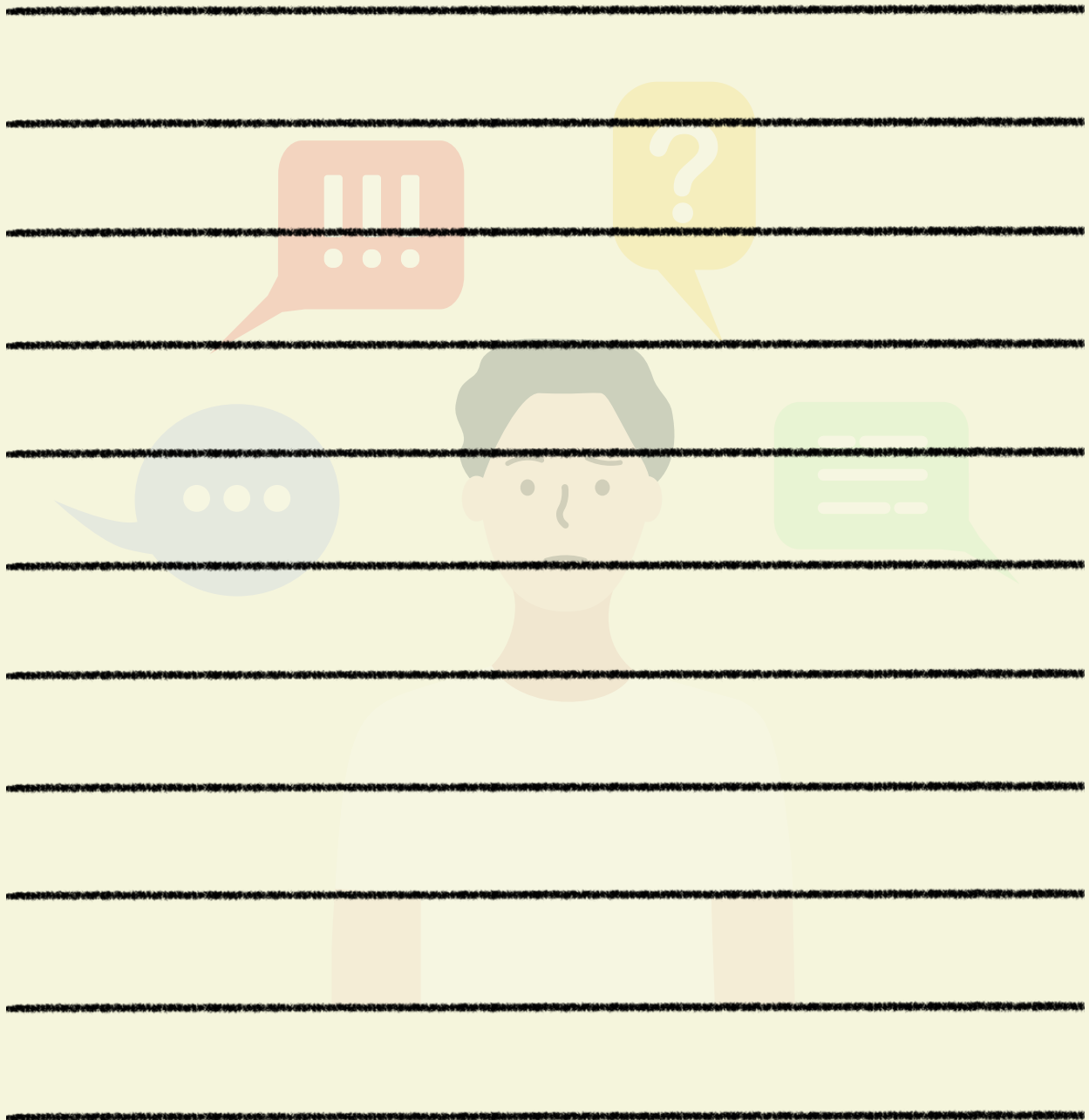
Have you ever experienced bias followed by judgement from others?

Have you ever noticed your own biases change your interactions with others?

**We may not admit it or even be aware of it, but we all have biases.**



- Share a time when you judged someone or assumed something about them based on what you initially perceived with one of your five senses.
- What reasons or evidence was there for the judgement or assumption? Were you right?
- How did you feel about the situation? How did the other person feel about it? (Or how would they feel if they knew?)



# Principles of Harm Reduction

1. Acceptance for Better or Worse



2. Accepts a person's substance of choice



3. Accepts client's definition of better quality of life



4. Non-coercive provision of services



5. People who use drugs have a voice



6. Recognize systemic oppression, trauma, effects, etc



How can these principles influence how you respond to community members who are experiencing homelessness?

# Open-Ended Questions

*Open-ended questions start with "Why?" "How?" and "What?" They encourage a full answer, rather than the simple "yes" or "no" response that is usually given to a closed-ended question.*

Open-Ended Questions have the power to...

Reveal new  
Information...

Understand how to  
better provide  
assistance

De-Escalate

Change these closed-ended questions to open-ended...

1. Do you think this is the best place for you to be? \_\_\_\_\_
2. When are you going to stop coming to this entrance? \_\_\_\_\_
3. You know there are kids around here, right? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are you ever going to give up this lifestyle? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Can you stop bothering our vendors? If you're not going to buy anything you have to leave. \_\_\_\_\_



# Teamwork

Is there a codework within your team for when you need back-up support?

How does you team ensure safety of client & staff during event management?



Does your team communicate with all members about anticipated high-risk situations?

Do you know who to call when a situation gets physically dangerous?

# Practical Information & Practice

Let's look at how to assess and respond to different crises.

## A crisis is...

Disruption to usual pattern of life  
Being unable to deal effectively

Used up all possible coping skills  
Unaware of alternatives

## When do we get involved?

### Level 1 - Problems

Minor annoyances and frustrations of everyday life can be resolved

### Level 2 - Crisis

A stressful situation, difficulty in coping, Support can wait 24-48 hours

### Level 3 - Emergency

Threat to life, violence  
Requires immediate attention (911, DCFS, First Responders)

## Examples

Family Crisis

Economic Crisis

Community Crisis

Life Event Crisis

Nature Crisis

## 6-Step Approach to Crisis Resolution

### 1 - Define

Active listening

Clarify what the actual issue is

### 2 - Safety

Assess for:  
Safety &  
Suicidal  
Ideation

### 3 - Support

Support basic  
needs  
Validate  
experience

### 4 - Explore

Options  
Alternatives  
Referrals

### 5 - Plan

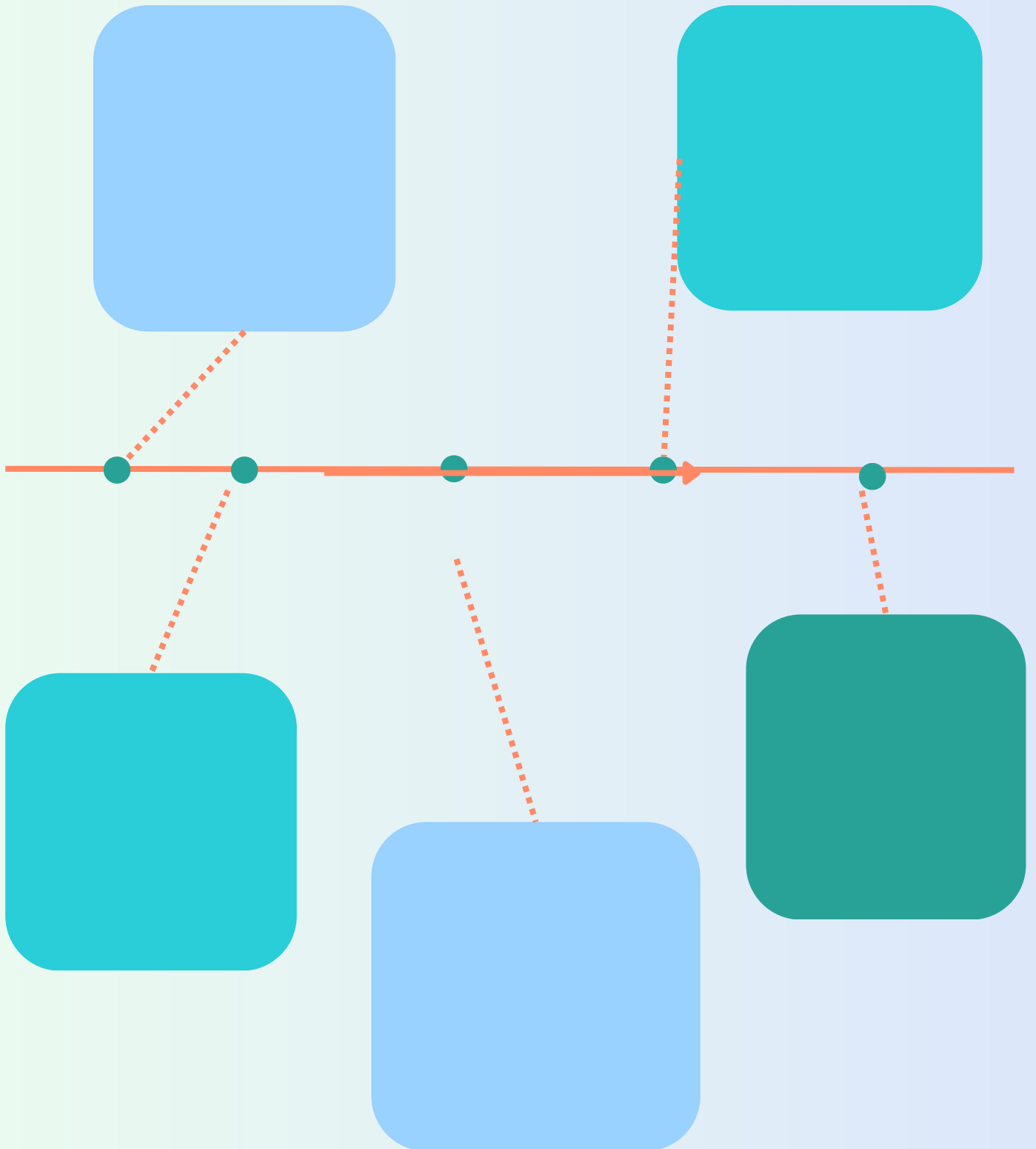
Realistic steps  
to take

### 6 - Commit

Document  
your plan!

# On the path...

At what points could bias affect event production?



# Our Journey

## PERCEPTION

- 1 We explored how our thinking can run in the background without our conscious knowledge; how that informs our point of view and behavior

## 2 BIAS & STIGMA

We looked at the role of bias as our brains way of making sense of the world and the impact of society on our biases. We differentiated implicit and explicit bias. And explored how bias can create stigma against people experiencing homelessness.

## HARM-REDUCTION

- 3 We looked at the applicable principles of harm reduction that could aid in productive and safe community engagement.

## 4 DE-ESCALATION AND CRISIS INTERVENTION

Understanding what steps enable safe emergency and crisis response.

# Evaluation

## Intersectionality & Implicit Bias

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Sign Out

*Thank  
You*

