

# Campus Safety CONFERENCE 2021

Be Vigilant

## Cultural Diversity, Stereotypes and Implicit Bias: Improve Training and Reduce Misunderstandings

**Lt. John Weinstein, PhD**

Northern Virginia Community College  
Police Department

[novapdoutreach@nvcc.edu](mailto:novapdoutreach@nvcc.edu)

703-764-5000



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# Disclaimer

- Raise awareness of current terminology and issues
- Stimulate discussion and free exchange of ideas
- Some may feel uncomfortable
- These are my personal views

# Introduction

- Officers are well trained in sensitivity, but situations are difficult and uncertain
  - Officers resent criticisms of racism resulting from actions/mistakes of a few
- *Everyone* has implicit biases (IB); not just LE
  - IBs *do* shape the way we respond
- Most training only focuses on LE problems
  - Pro-LE data, which tell a different story, are rarely shared
- Training does not teach us *how* to react to someone else when both parties have IBs



# TRAFFIC STOP RANT

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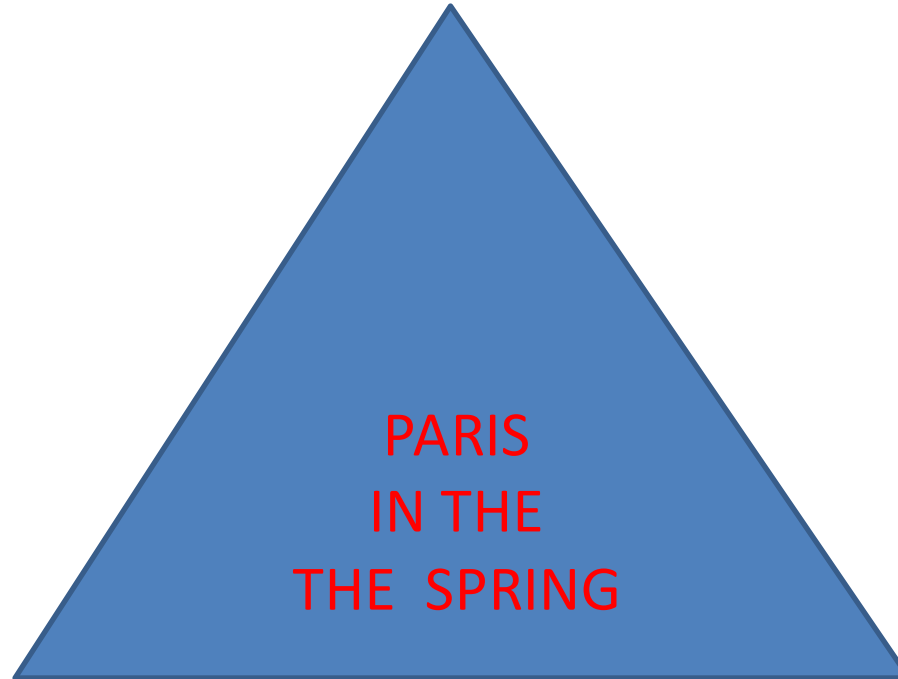
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## Bottom Line Up Front

- As unique individuals, our experiences and perspectives differ, resulting in potential misunderstanding and conflict.
- *We are all under the influence* of stresses and our perceptions.
- People don't see us the way we see ourselves.
- Sometimes, we are the problem.
- Misunderstand, divisiveness and conflict will not disappear.
- Effective communications is key.

# What do you see?



**Are you comfortable with the way things are?**  
**[Jane Elliot]**





# Cultural Diversity (CD)

- CD encompasses acceptance/respect.
- It means recognizing our individual differences and understanding that each individual is unique.
  - Being different isn't bad or wrong
- What are these differences?

## Individual characteristics (Seen and Unseen)

- Race
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Sexual orientation
- Sexual identity
- Religious beliefs
- Cultural group
- Physical/mental abilities
- Political beliefs
- National origin
- Socio-economic status
- Age
- Disability

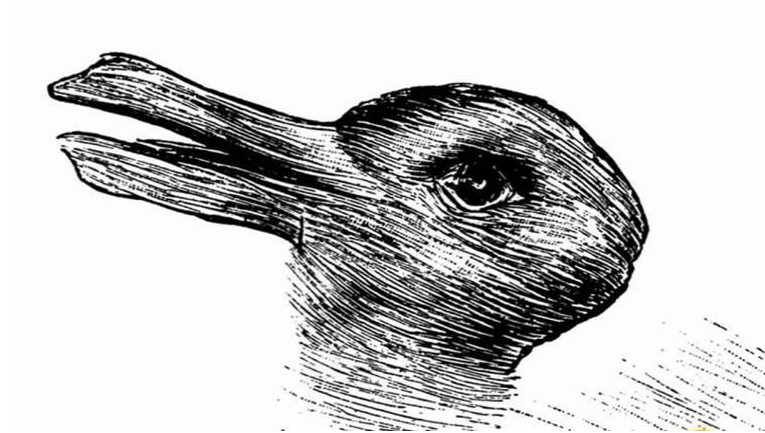
# Stereotypes

- Stereotype: a **standardized mental picture** that one person or group of people holds in common about another person or group of people.
  - Assumptions **can make us blind/support preconceptions**.
- Stereotyping is **common (everyone does it!)**.
  - Many people do it to justify their conduct in relation to the group they have stereotyped.
  - Stereotypes can either be **positive or negative**, for example, “Asians are intelligent”; “Hispanics are emotional” ; or cops are racist
    - Positive stereotyping can be just as dangerous for a leader to use as negative stereotyping. **WHY?**

# The challenge: Diversity

- NOVA is diverse; over 180 nationalities
- Our interactions and decisions are often shaped by our beliefs, values and experiences
  - e.g., Officer safety considerations
  - e.g., Attitude toward extended family
  - Others?
- Generational differences (e.g., **Coddling of the American Mind**)
  - How are kids today different from their parents? Grandparents?
  - How do generational attitudes toward COVID differ?
- Language differences (regional; ESL)
- Ideological differences (liberals vs. conservatives)
- Different perspectives determined by what we see/think we see

# WHAT DO YOU SEE?











# Policy and Guidance

# Videos



# What are the facts?

# Is there “systemic police racism”?

- Crime and suspect behavior are better predictors than race.
  - Harvard study (2016): no racial disparity in police-involved shootings
  - Philadelphia Police study (2015): white officers less likely to shoot an African American than an officer of color
- What about the killing of unarmed African Americans (AA)?
  - AAs are 13% of the population but 9 unarmed AAs killed in 2019 (vs. 19 whites)
    - Should have been only 3-4; not 9.
  - Statistics
    - AA arrests, let alone violence, are rare: ~19k arrests vs. 980k calls received (~2%) (Orlando PD)
    - 2018: 375 million citizen-police contacts. 235 AAs killed (.0000007)
      - 85,000 medical malpractice suits filed every year; 1,000,000 medical injuries/deaths
    - AAs constitute 53% of known homicides and 60% of known robberies
      - Increased contact under dangerous situations with police makes deadly confrontations more likely
- *Does this mean LEOs have nothing to worry about?*

## Questions for self-reflection

- **Picture your three best friends. Do they look like you?**
- **Have you ever avoided sitting next to someone in public based on how you perceived their race, religion, or ability?**
- **Have you ever justified using specific language (perhaps offensive to some) because a friend told you it doesn't bother them?**
- **Have you ever jokingly told someone to "stop acting like a girl", "man up", or "grow a pair"??**
- **Have you ever specified someone's race when it was not necessarily relevant (e.g., referring to someone as "a black doctor" or "Latina lawyer" or "white cashier")?**
- **Have you ever assumed a person's stance on social issues based on their religion (e.g., Catholics are anti-abortion)?**
- **Have you ever ruled out certain neighborhoods as places you might live or send your kids to school based on its racial demographics?**

# Definition, Causes and Impacts

- Police officers are subject to **IB due to the nature of LE work** that focuses on negative behavior.
  - Is experience sufficient or is it a self-fulfilling prophesy
- We make assumptions, stereotypes, and unintentional actions (positive or negative) toward others based on identity labels like race, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, or ability.
  - IB is natural and necessary to function
  - Everyone has IB. It means your brain is working normally, recognizing patterns/making generalizations.
    - There is no such thing as perfect objectivity
  - Exist at the subconscious level and may be unknown to us
    - These stereotypes often *confirm what we already think*
    - *Triggered through rapid and automatic mental associations (e.g., drug addicts, mental health patients, and homeless are weak and/or dangerous.)*
    - These generalizations may be significant when we have to make split-second decisions.
- Failure to address these issues could lead to a crisis of legitimacy

ADAPTED WITH PERMISSION FROM: [Anti-Defamation League Education Glossary Terms, 2018](#)



# **Mental Health: Another Complicating Factor**

# Coronavirus and Stress

- Causes of stress/psychological trauma
  - Death
  - Guilt
  - Fear (contagion; 80k cancer diagnoses may be missed)
  - Uncertainty
  - Feelings of vulnerability and separation/anomie
  - Resentment (loss of control over lives)
  - Financial duress due to unemployment (1.4m HC workers)
  - Isolation with same people everyday
  - Doubts about institutions (government)
  - Questions about faith

# Manifestations of Stress

(not just others; us too?)

- Depression
- Suicides and suicide attempts
  - 2017: 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in US; 47,173 people (vs. 19,510 homicides)
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for people between ages of 10-35
    - 4<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death for people between ages of 35-54
- Substance abuse/overdoses
- PTSD
- Domestic violence
- Increases in chronic health problems
- Inability to sleep

Some statistics:

1000% increase in hotline calls in 4/20 over 4/19  
50% of Americans report COVID has worsened MH  
65% increase in 4/20 to online therapy counseling  
+1% unemployment → +1.6 suicide rate

# Mental Health (MH) / Clinical Issues

## (depression, psychoses, manic, panic)

- Nearly 20% of US adults lives with mental illness, but fewer than half receive treatment (2016, Nat'l Inst. MH)
- Characterized as an “epidemic”
- National College Health Assessment results:
  - 21 million college students transitioning to adulthood undergo significant challenges to mental health and well-being.
    - New social structure; greater academic pressure; less familial support; campus activity obligations; struggle to balance academic, social, nutrition, exercise, etc. (IACLEA, Jan/Feb 2019)
  - *60% of students surveyed experienced overwhelming stress/anxiety.*
  - *40% were too depressed to function.*
    - Only 10-15% of these students seek MH assistance.

## Manifestations

(e.g., developmental issues, PTSD, TBI)

***Everyone is under the influence!***

- Sensory overload
- Challenged by abstract thoughts
- Most crave routine
- Frustration due to shame, confusion or hopelessness
- Preoccupation w/certain ideas
- Problems with reason and problem-solving
- Volume
- Memory problems
- Lack of empathy and shared perspectives
- Embarrassment
- Defensiveness (personal space)
- Pacifying behaviors (may appear disrespectful)
  - Rocking
  - Stringing
  - Pacing /inability to sit still

# How to Deal with MH-Challenged People

## (Often, it's best to do so in private)

- Establish expectations early
- Remain calm; be patient
- Listen and allow to vent
- Don't invade personal space
  - Hands off if possible
- Ask; don't demand, threaten or debate
  - Give options
- Ask:
  - What do you need?
  - What can I do to help?
  - What would help?
  - Do you understand what I'm saying?
- Employ 3 E's:
  - Empathy
  - Explanation
  - Ego control
- Set time limits
- Outreach on their terms
- Engage/direct to services
- Summarize and paraphrase
- If issue can't be resolved, cancel class; offer to meet with student
- Document/report to appropriate officials

**MH issues affect us too!**

### Law Enforcement Suicides and Line of Duty Deaths 2016-2018

Suicide source: [bluehelp.org](http://bluehelp.org)

LODD source: [odmp.org](http://odmp.org)

	2016	2017	2018
Suicide	140	159	159
9/11 related illness	12	9	14
Accidental	0	0	1
Aircraft accident	1	2	0
Animal related	1	1	0
Assault	3	6	3
Automobile crash	20	28	26
Boating accident	0	2	0
Drowned	2	5	4
Duty related illness	1	3	4
Exposure to toxins	0	1	0
Fall	1	0	1
Gunfire	64	45	52
Gunfire (Accidental)	3	0	1
Heart attack	16	16	17
Motorcycle crash	8	4	3
Stabbed	1	1	0
Struck by train	1	0	2
Struck by vehicle	10	4	6
Training accident	1	0	0
Unidentified	0	1	0
Vehicle pursuit	4	5	6
Vehicular assault	13	6	8



# Factors Causing Communications Problems

# Causes of Misunderstanding/Conflict

## (sometimes, we are the cause)

- Stress
- Cultural differences (personal space, eye contact, touching, smiling, volume)
  - Some people are better than reading them than others
- Lack of trust (no communication or misunderstandings)
  - Others view our officer safety procedures as threatening
- Generational differences
- Different priorities
- Different expectations
- Mental health problems
- Ego
- Failure to listen
- Failure to explain (we think others are like us and view things the same way)
- Using the wrong words (“Calm down”; “I’m not going to say this again”; “never” and “always”; “because those are the rules”; “because I said so.”)
- Arguing/debating in front of a crowd
- Non-verbal cues
- Everybody is under the influence!

## **2=6** (Others view us differently than we view ourselves)

- A face-to-face encounter involves multiple interactions:
- You
  - Real self
  - Self as seen by self
  - *Self as seen by others*
- Client
  - Real self
  - *Self as seen by self*
  - Self as seen by others

## Face-to-face interaction: Not so simple

- Words never tell the whole message
- React to the meaning, not the words
  - Example: arrive on scene of a burglary
    - It's about time (the words)
    - I feel violated and helpless (the meaning)
- Expect to be misunderstood
  - Reasons: age, culture, region, expectations, trust, etc.
  - “Between what I think I want to say, what I believe I am saying, what I say, what you want to hear, what you believe you understand, and what you understood, there are **at least nice possibilities for misunderstanding**.”
  - Filtered by fear, frustration, culture, stress, etc.
- People do not say what they mean.
  - Words only constitute part of the message.
  - The rest comes from voice/other **non-verbal indicators**.

# Non-verbal communications

- Much of message comes from gestures, posture, and body movements
  - Crossing arms
  - Rolling eyes
- Different people interpret the same cue differently
  - Failure to look into someone's eyes
  - Checking watch

## What's the message here?



# Culture

# Inter-Cultural Differences

*“Other cultures are NOT failed attempts at being you.  
They are unique manifestations of the human spirit.”  
(Wade Davis, Canadian anthropologist)*

- *Personal space*
  - Influenced by *gender*. Two women will stand closer together than a man and woman
  - Influenced by *status*. Generally, a person of high status is granted more space. This is important to cultures with greater consciousness of status and social class, such as Asian cultures.
  - Influenced by *friendship*. Friends stand closer together.
  - *Available space*. Elevator vs. empty room. Standing at a urinal.
  - Influenced by *experience*. People from NYC and India are accustomed to less personal space than someone from Mongolia or Montana.
- *Eye contact (Reflects honesty, respect, shame and interest, but the rules governing eye contact and what it means vary from culture to culture.)*
  - For Latin Americans, it is respectful to avoid direct eye contact with authority figures.
  - Muslims consider direct eye contact between males and females bold and flirtatious.
  - Arabs and Southern Europeans have more eye contact than Americans for the same gender (sizing up?); Brits make less eye contact than Americans.
  - Asian: brief contact, then look away (especially with authority figures/superiors). Prolonged eye contact is offensive in Asia.



# Inter-Cultural Differences (cont.)

- Volume (Communicates shyness, uncertainty, anger, enthusiasm)
  - White Americans: loud voice suggests anger/hostility; non-white Americans, Latin Americans, and Africans: loud voice signifies an exciting conversation.
  - Baseline volume in Asia and Western Europe is lower than for Americans, who are thought of as rude.
  - Africa: soft voice may be a sign of witchcraft, plotting or malicious gossip.
- Touch
  - *Latin Americans and Middle Easterners touch more frequently than Americans*, who limit touching to handshakes and shoulder pats. ME and Latin men will walk arm in arm, or even hold hands, signifying only friendship.
  - Japanese do not like to be touched in a casual relationship. (e.g., Reid interview technique)
  - ME: do not touch someone of the opposite sex.
  - *Touching someone on the head is offensive to most Asians (Gran Torino).*
  - *Toughing someone with the left hand is offensive in the ME. (Left hand is reserved for personal hygiene activities).*
  - Men kissing on the cheek is ok in France and Russia (A&B in US?).

# Inter-Cultural Differences (cont.)

- **Other indicators**

- Smiles

- Americans: indicates friendship and goodwill
    - N. Europeans: smile less frequently, making Americans seem childish and flippant. In Russia, it's considered impolite.
    - **Asians: smile to smooth over embarrassing/awkward situations**

- Facial control

- Americans: individualism results in least control over facial expressions
    - Russians: exhibit the most control, followed by Japanese and Koreans (who seem 'inscrutable' to us).
    - Scandinavians consider a smile/any facial expression to show emotions to show weakness.

## Head movements

America: nodding up and down means yes.

ME and Bulgaria: same gesture means no; In Asia, nodding may not mean yes.

## Hand gestures

- American thumbs up/OK signs are vulgar to Iranians and Latin Americans,.
- Shaking hands is not allowed for Saudi women and in some other Arab countries.
- Hands on hips: signifies hostility in Mexico.
- Shaking fist at a sporting event (America) is vulgar in Lebanon.

# Inter-Cultural Differences (cont.)

- *Feet on the desk*: highly offensive to Asians and ME.
- Interruptions: expected in Latin America.
- Indication of height: open hand in Colombia if referring to a person; otherwise, you're signifying an animal's height.
- *No me jodes!*
- Time
  - ☐ Americans: timeliness indicates respect.
  - ☐ *Latin Americans: respect means continuing a discussion to its natural conclusion, even if it makes you late for your next meeting.*
- Silence
  - ☐ Americans: uncomfortable
  - ☐ Other cultures: respect, seriousness, thoughtfulness, disdain
- Agreement
  - ☐ Americans: yes means yes
  - ☐ Asians: yes may mean maybe, or I'll consider it (because it's too embarrassing to say no).

# Effective Communications

# Communication tips

- *Listen*
  - “Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.” (Covey, 7 Habits of Highly Effective People)
- Practice the 3 E's:
  - Ego control (it's not about us; we have the last word; we are pros)
  - Explanation (give reasons and options)
  - Empathy
- Know your own triggers (Avoid the Niagara Falls moment)
- Paraphrase (Let me make sure I understand. You're saying ... because...)
- Don't go to endgame immediately
- Don't say the wrong thing
- Don't be afraid to apologize
- Keep it private
- Be aware of your non-verbal cues.

# Things You Should *Never* Say

- Calm down.
- Come here (Are you calling a dog?)
- You wouldn't understand. (you're stupid)
- Because those are the rules. (I have no independent authority)
- It's none of your business. (you're an outsider)
- What do you want me to do about it?
- What's your problem?

## Things You Should *Never* Say (cont.)

- I'm not going to say this again! (yes you are!)
- I'm doing this for your own good. (patronizing)
- You never..... or, You always.....
- You people.....
- Why don't you be reasonable?
- You want to go to jail?
- Have a good day (after giving a ticket)

## 5-Step Interaction (a good report format)

- Ask (ethical appeal)
- Set context/explain why (reasonable appeal)
- Provide options (personal appeal)
  - Positive then negative options
- Confirm non-compliance (practical appeal)
- Act (if necessary)



# Remember.....

- Establish trust and understanding
- Human interactions are like a dance.
  - Leadership is dependent on followership.
- *Everybody* has implicit biases; not just LE.
- Sometimes, *we* are the problem
  - Our own biases, known and implicit.
  - Know your triggers.
  - Pay attention to your and other's non-verbal cues.
  - Watch your voice (tone, pitch, pace and modulation). It's what generates complaints.
  - Listen!

Remember the 3 E's:

1. Empathize.
  2. Ego control: It's not about you.
  3. Explain.
- Don't be complacent, protect yourself
  - We are here to serve as well as protect
  - Have fun; enjoy the challenge of diversity

# Remember: our ultimate goal



## Reminders

- Access to the presentation
- Evaluations
- Social Media

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