BIAS BUSTERS
Strategies for Disrupting Bias

ADDRESS THE BIAS

I-Statements
- Use I-Statements to express how the comment/behavior made you feel and the impact it had on you.
  - "I felt X (feelings), when you said or did Y (comment or behavior), and it Z (describe the impact on you)."

Clarifying Questions
- A strategic question lowers defenses and avoids "yes" or "no" answers. This allows important questions to be considered, which can lead to a shift in perspective.
  - E.g. "What do you mean by...?"
  - E.g. "Have you considered the impact on...?"
  - E.g. "How would it feel to hear that about a loved one?"

Go Back, Then Act
- It's okay to take time to digest what happened in order to know how to respond. Take time, think it over, then go back and act.

LOWER TENSIONS

Distract
- Distract attention away from the bias behavior to de-escalate a situation.
  - E.g. Change the topic: Ask for the time, talk about class, discuss evening/weekend plans.

Humor
- Use humor to deflect the bias behavior but don't undermine what you say.

Silent Stare
- Use an intentional non-response or disapproving look to demonstrate that you do not support the bias experienced or witnessed.

LEAN IN

Check-In
- Show concern for the person impacted by asking how they are doing and wait for an answer.

Listen Closely
- Leave preconceived notions of the situation behind and actively listen to the person sharing about the bias incident.

Acknowledge & Accept
- Be careful not to tell someone how to feel. Believe what the person shared by accepting their experience as true.
- Make the person feel that their concerns are valid and avoid dismissing or minimizing their reality.

Be an Ally
- Take a stand to promote inclusion in the UM community and disrupt bias that you experience or witness happening to others.

IMPACT

Impact versus Intent
- Remember that some behaviors may be well-intended, but they can still have a hurtful, negative impact on the person/groups. Focus on how they have been impacted more than the intent behind the actions.

Apologize
- Offering an apology acknowledges the hurt and impact the bias behavior has caused.

Carry Lesson Forward
- Apply what you learned to future experiences to prevent bias behavior and share your lessons with others.

NAME RESOURCES

- Report Bias at BERT.olemiss.edu.
- Call Campus Police at (901) 988-7234 if you feel unsafe.
- Seek Support from faculty/staff, Counseling Center, peers, family.

Report bias at bert.olemiss.edu