

**RACISM,  
UNCONSCIOUS  
BIAS AND  
CREATING  
INCLUSIVE  
ENVIRONMENTS**

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UNIVERSITY of  
**ROCHESTER**  
MEDICAL CENTER

*We would like to acknowledge with respect the Seneca Nation, known as the “Great Hill People” and “Keepers of the Western Door” of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We take this opportunity to thank the original caretakers on whose ancestral lands the University of Rochester now stands.*

Guzman-Rea, J., Jemison, P., 2020. (Seneca, Heron Clan)





There are no right or wrong answers. Everyone's experiences and opinions are important, and everyone is encouraged to express themselves without consequence.



If expressing a different point of view, participants should focus on sharing their own experiences rather than invalidating someone else's.



Participants should monitor their own participation to ensure that all voices are heard.



What is said during the session is confidential.

# SAFE SPACE - GROUND RULES



Understanding key concepts such as racism, privilege, unconscious bias, microaggressions, and allyship



Recognize how these concepts impact our environment

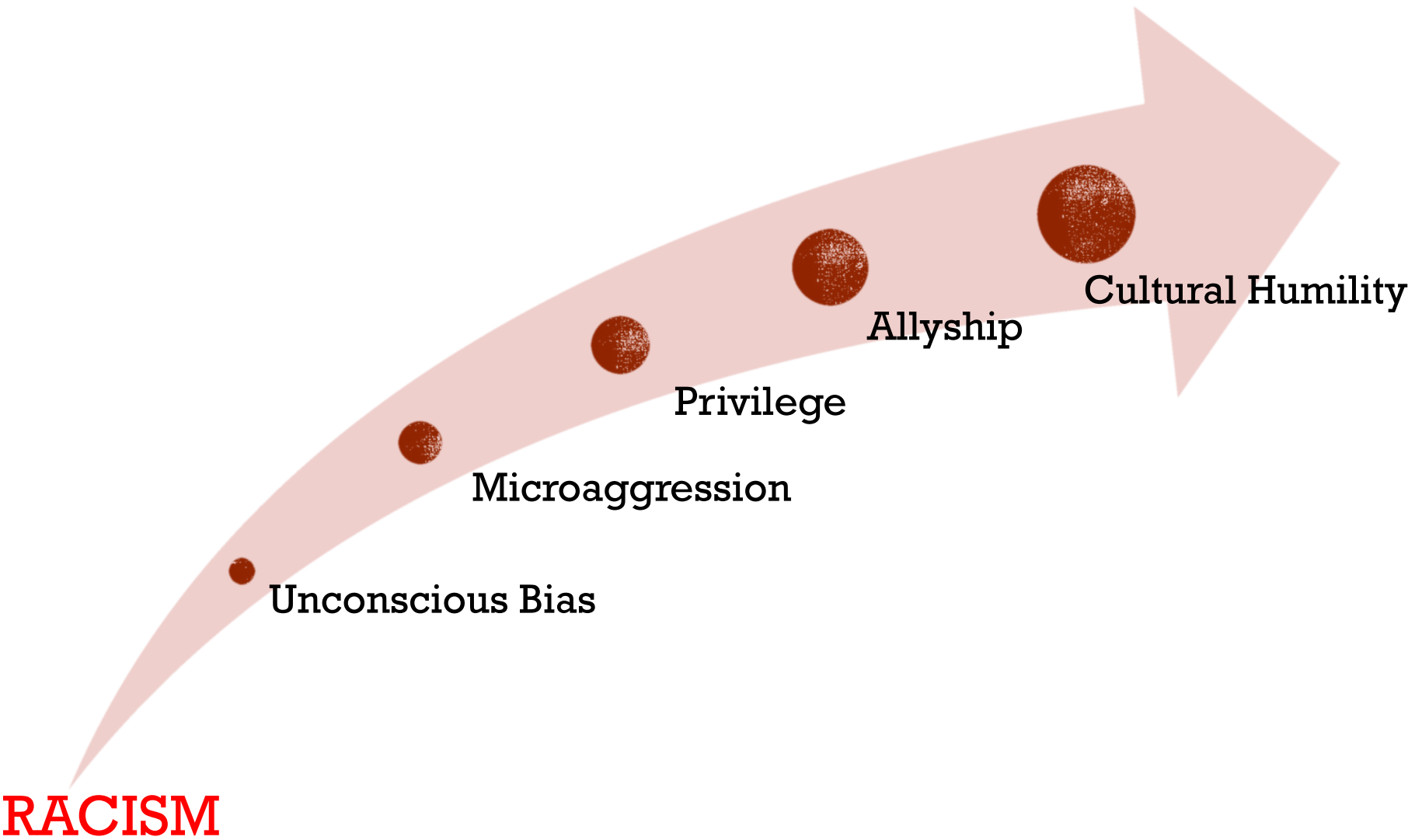


Describe potential strategies for interrupting behaviors associated with unconscious bias to help create an inclusive environment

## OBJECTIVES



# UNDERSTANDING TERMINOLOGY AND RELATIONSHIPS





The idea of race and racial inferiority was created to justify the unequal treatment of enslaved people.



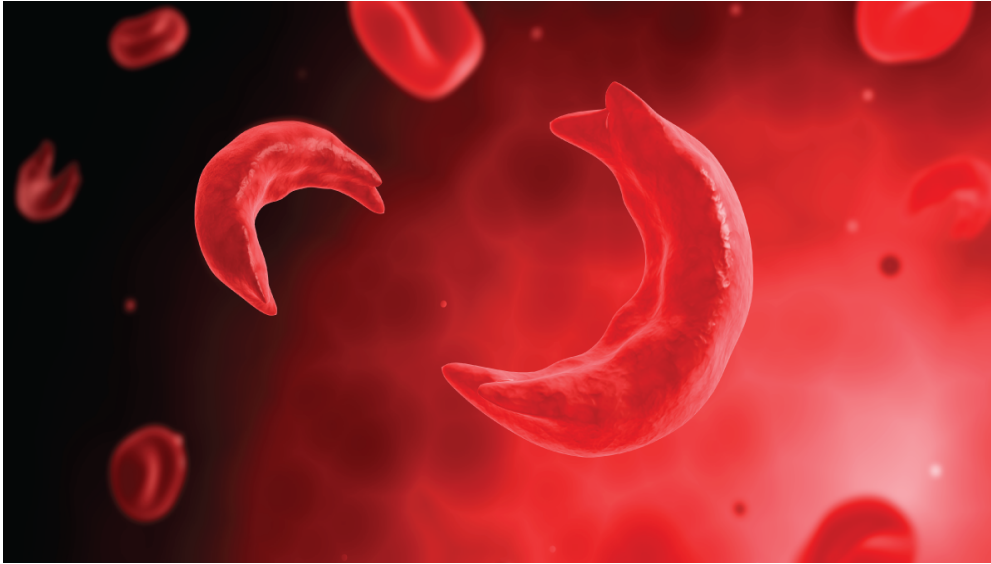
“Race” is an historical “scientific” and biological myth. It is an *idea*. Today, scientists prefer to use the term “ancestry” to describe human diversity.



Geneticists tell us that there is often more variability within a given so-called “race” than between “races” and that there are no essential genetic markers linked specifically to “race.”

# RACE

# ANCESTRY



Sickle-cell anemia is more commonly found in those of “sub-Saharan African” descent, rather than in “Black” patients.



Cystic fibrosis is more commonly found in those of “Northern European” descent, rather than in “white” patients.

# BLACK, INDIGENOUS, AND PEOPLE OF COLOR



- Centers the experiences of Black and Indigenous groups and demonstrates solidarity between communities of color
- Reinforces that not all people of color have the same experience, especially when it comes to legislation and systemic oppression



# RACISM

Let's first define racism:

■ Racism =

Racial Prejudice (white people and people of color have this)

*Plus*

Systemic, Institutional Power (white people have this)



# RACISM



HEALTH



SCIENCE



GOVERNMENT



BANKING



EDUCATION



PRISON



TELEVISION



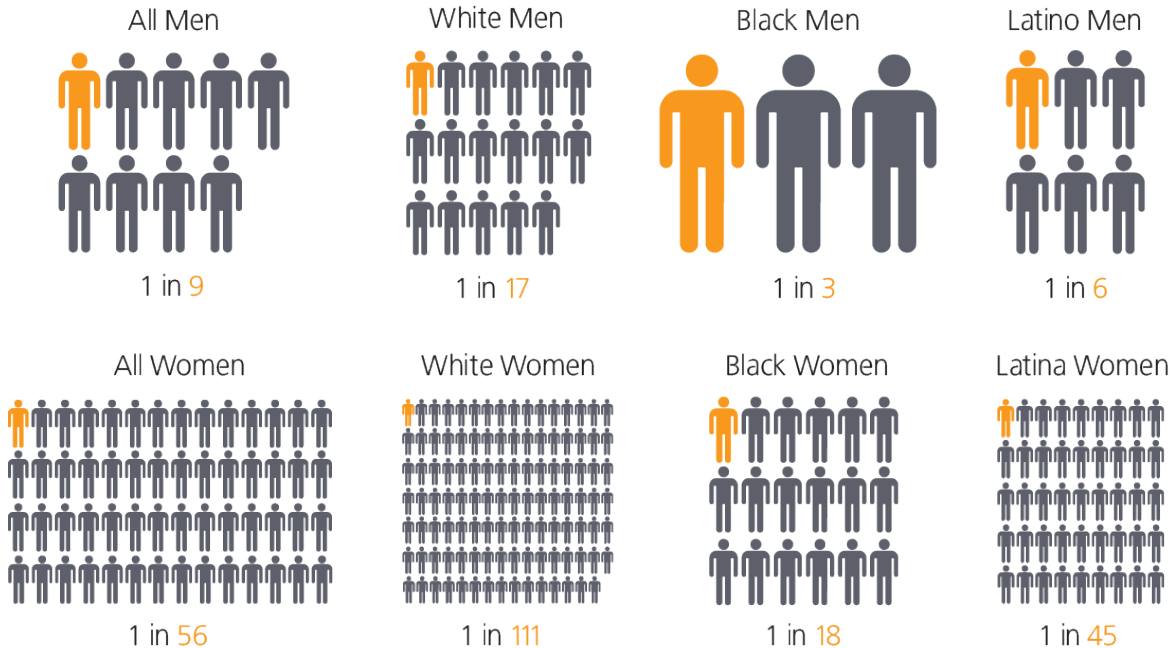
LAW  
ENFORCEMENT

# LEVELS ON WHICH RACISM EXISTS

- Systemic
- Institutional
- Interpersonal
- Internalized



## Lifetime Likelihood of Imprisonment of U.S. Residents Born in 2001



# SYSTEMIC RACISM

Source: Bonczar, T. (2003). *Prevalence of Imprisonment in the U.S. Population, 1974-2001*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.



- Systemic (structural) racism is racial bias among institutions and across society
- Ongoing racial inequalities.



# INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

- Institutional racism occurs within institutions and systems of power.
- Institutions create policies, practices, and procedures that create different outcomes for different racial groups.
- The systematic distribution of resources, power and opportunity in our society to the benefit of people who are white and the exclusion of people of color.
- For example, the under- and misrepresentation of certain racial groups in the media.



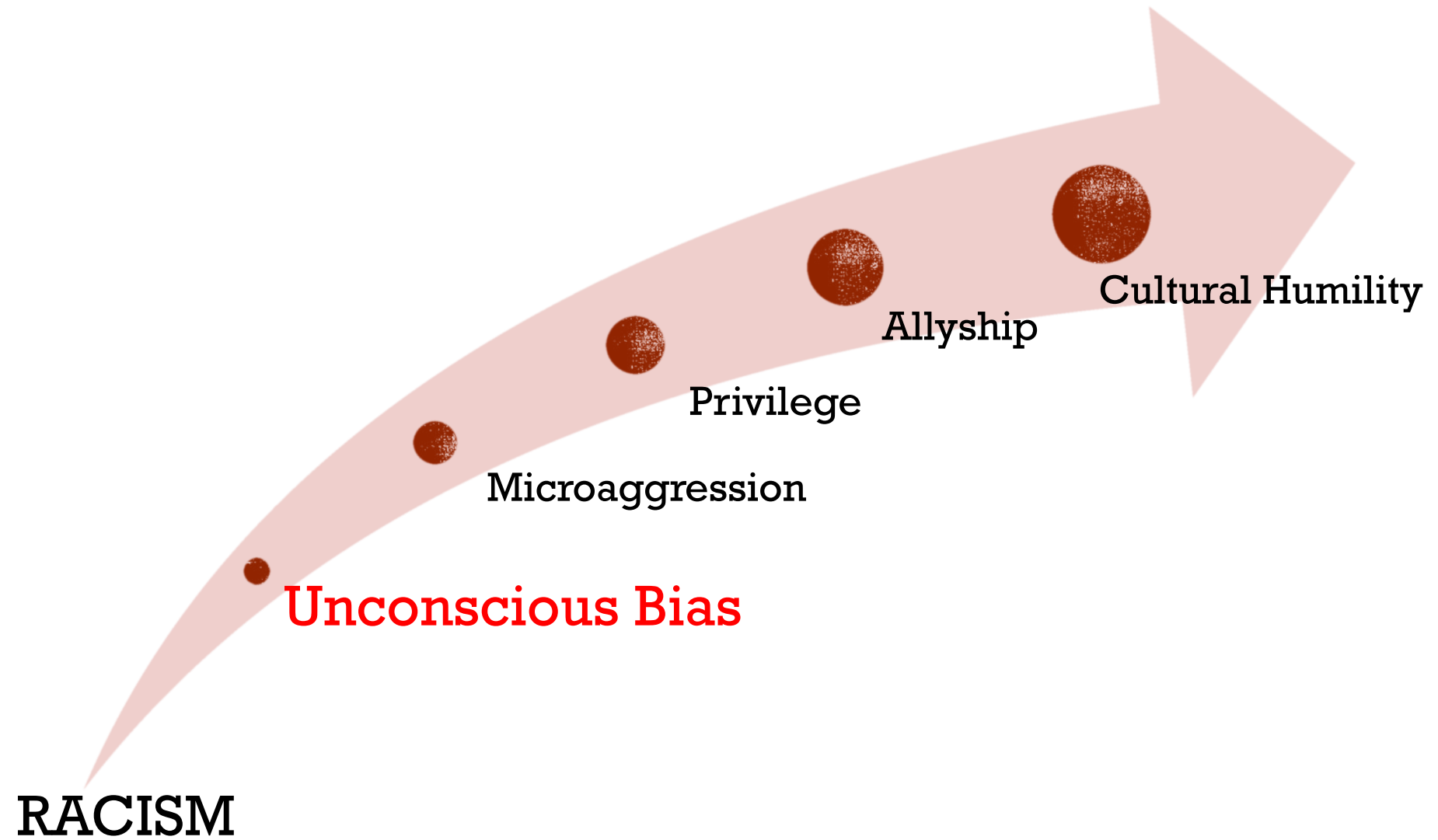
# INTERPERSONAL RACISM

- Interpersonal racism occurs between individuals.
- Individual racism refers to an individual's racist assumptions, beliefs or behaviors; can be conscious or unconscious.
- Once we bring our private beliefs into our interaction with others, racism is now in the interpersonal realm.

# INTERNALIZED RACISM

- Internalized racism lies within individuals.
- Internalized racism is the personal conscious or subconscious acceptance of the dominant society's racist views, stereotypes and biases of racial and ethnic groups.
- It can lead to prejudice towards others of a different race; internalized oppression – negative beliefs about oneself by people of color; or internalized privilege – beliefs about superiority or entitlement by white people.

# UNDERSTANDING TERMINOLOGY AND RELATIONSHIPS







**Bias:** “prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.”



**Explicit bias** is an attitude that somebody is consciously aware of having.



**Unconscious bias** is a positive or negative mental attitude towards a thing, person, or group that a person holds at an unconscious level.

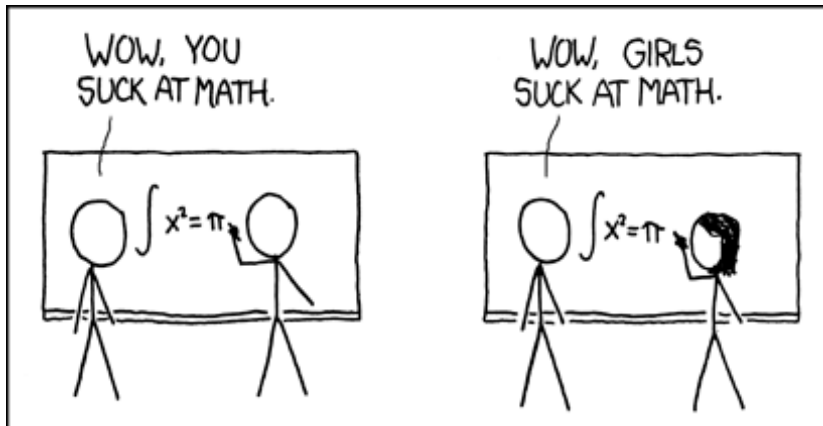
## WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF BIAS?

# STEREOTYPE

“To believe unfairly that all people or things with a particular characteristic are the same” (Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary)

# HOW ARE STEREOTYPES CREATED?

- We tend to evaluate individuals based on the characteristics of the group to which they belong





Everyone has it



Think of it as a HABIT of MIND born out of our experiences



“Ordinary mental operations that serve us quite well in most circumstances but can sometimes fail our intentions”



We have a natural tendency to “lump” – make associations that organize our worlds



Most people believe they have less/fewer unconscious biases than others



It is difficult to conceptualize how our unconscious biases are not the same as our conscious ideas/thoughts

# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT OUR UNCONSCIOUS MIND AND UNCONSCIOUS BIAS?

# TEST: HOW MANY PASSES DOES THE TEAM IN WHITE MAKE?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSQJP40PcGI>

# WHAT ACTIVATES OUR BIASES?

Our biases are most likely to be activated by three key conditions. They are:

- stress
- time constraints
- multi-tasking



**Old Framework:** Prejudice is bad so if I think or act with bias, I am a bad person



**New Framework:** Prejudiced thoughts and actions are habits that we all have and breaking these habits requires more than good intentions

## SHIFT IN CONCEPTUALIZATION OF PREJUDICE

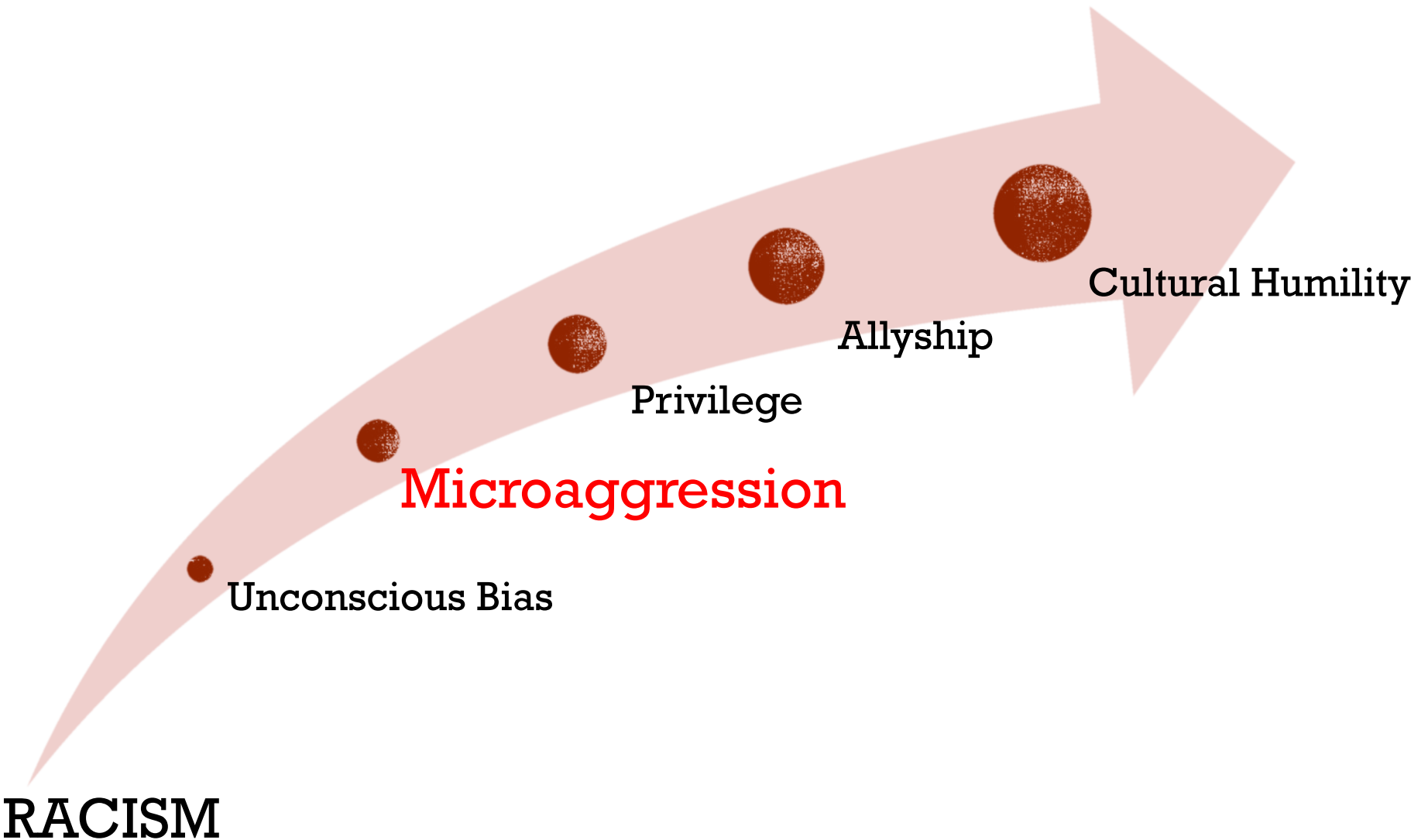
# LEARNING AND UNLEARNING



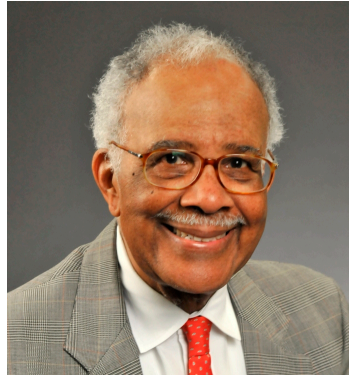
- Unconscious bias develops early in life from repeated reinforcement of social stereotypes. Implicit pro-white bias occurs among children as young as 3-5 years old. (Baron, A. S., & Banaji, M. R. (2006). *Psychological science*, 17(1), 53-58.)
- Because unconscious biases are learned behaviors – like any learned behavior – they can be “unlearned.”



# UNDERSTANDING TERMINOLOGY AND RELATIONSHIPS



# MICROAGGRESSIONS



First proposed by psychiatrist Chester M. Pierce, MD, in the 1970s.

Subtle, verbal and nonverbal slights, insults, indignities, and denigrating messages directed toward an individual due to their group identity, often automatically and unconsciously. Usually committed by well-intentioned folks who are unaware of the hidden messages being communicated.

# MICROAGGRESSIONS

Microaggressions are similar to carbon monoxide -  
*“invisible, but potentially lethal”* - continuous exposure  
to these type of interactions *“can be a sort of death by a  
thousand cuts to the victim”*

Sue, (2010) Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation

# THE MEDIA



AFP/Getty Images - Tue Aug 30, 3:47 AM ET

Two residents waded through chest-deep water after **finding** bread and soda from a local grocery store after Hurricane Katrina came through the area in New Orleans, Louisiana. (AFP/Getty Images/Chris Graythen)

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Recommend It: Average (257 votes)



#### RELATED

▪ [Katrina's Effects, at a Glance](#) AP - Wed Aug 31, 11:11 AM ET

[Hurricanes & Tropical Storms](#)

ADD SLIDESHOW TO MY YAHOO! OR RSS READER



(About My Yahoo! and RSS)

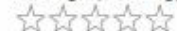


AP - Tue Aug 30, 11:31 AM ET

A young man walks through chest deep flood water after **looting** a grocery store in New Orleans on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2005. Flood waters continue to rise in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina did extensive damage when it

[Email Photo](#) [Print Photo](#)

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Average (Loading)



#### RELATED

▪ [Looting Takes Place in View of La. Police](#) AP - T

You speak English  
so well!

You're so  
articulate!

I'm not racist. I  
have Black  
friends.

Faculty/medical  
student of color  
mistaken for a  
service worker

Descriptions "a  
great female  
scientist"

Don't blame me, I  
never owned  
slaves.

Labeling an assertive  
female as "aggressive",  
while describing a male  
counterpart as a "forceful  
leader".

## EXAMPLES OF MICROAGGRESSIONS



**"I DON'T SEE  
COLOR"**

# HOW DO MICRO- AGGRESSIONS IMPACT PEOPLE?

- ❑ Build up over time
- ❑ Feel:
  - Unwelcome
  - Unacknowledged
  - Undervalued
  - Excluded
- ❑ Erode confidence



Hiring (affects diversity)



Promotion (career advancement)



Admissions (diversity)



Committee assignments  
(organizational decisions and  
policy)



Clinical (health care disparities)

# REPORTS OF THE IMPACT OF UNCONSCIOUS BIAS





Are Emily and Greg More  
Employable than Lakisha and  
Jamal?



5,000 fictitious job applications  
sent to companies with help  
wanted ads in newspapers  
throughout Boston and Chicago



Emily and Greg receive 50%  
more callbacks

## EFFECT OF RACE ON JOB APPLICANTS



Black children with appendicitis were 80 percent less likely than white children to receive opioids for their pain (Goyal et al., 2015).



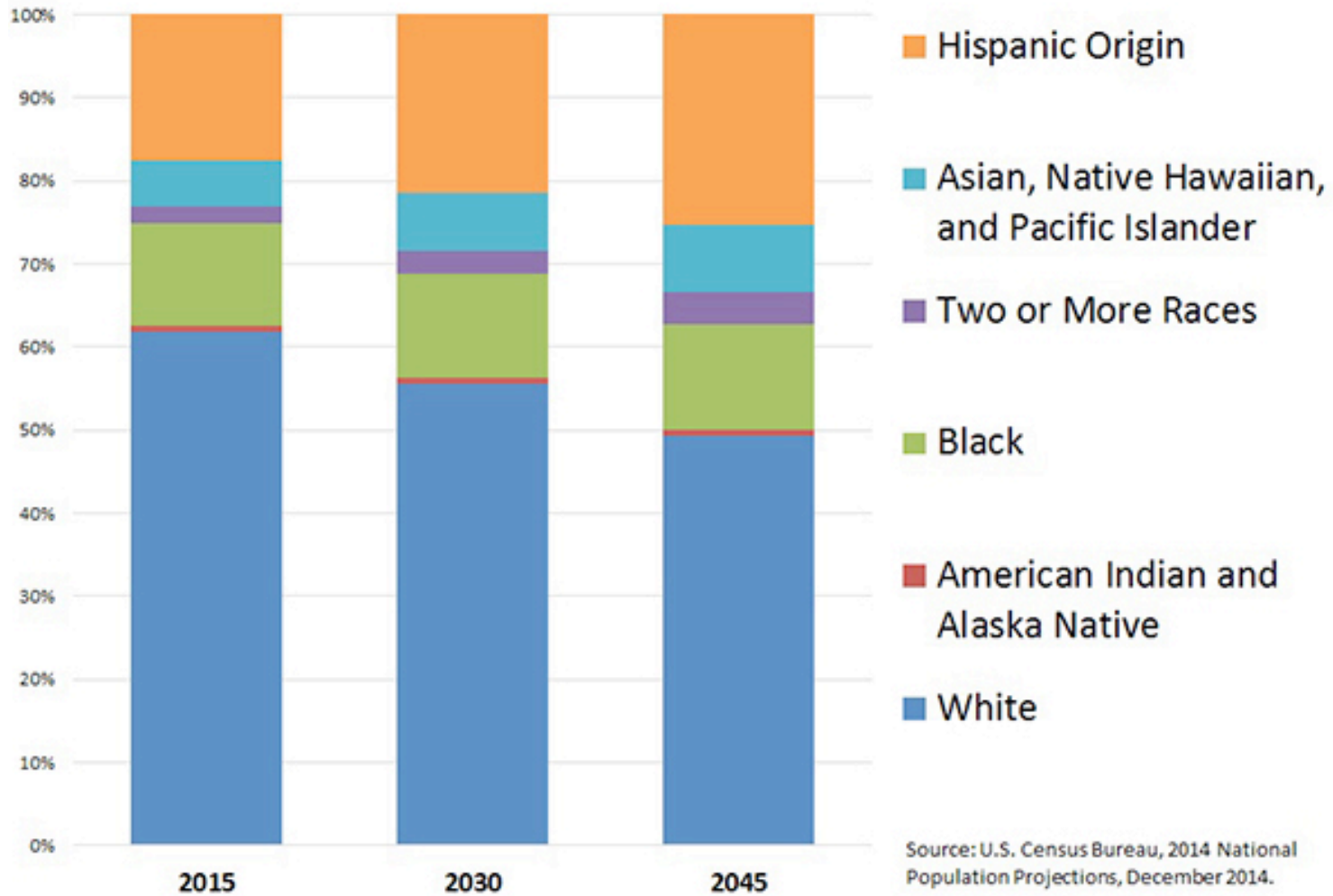
Some white medical students and residents believe Black people's nerve endings are less sensitive than white people's (Hoffman et al., 2016).

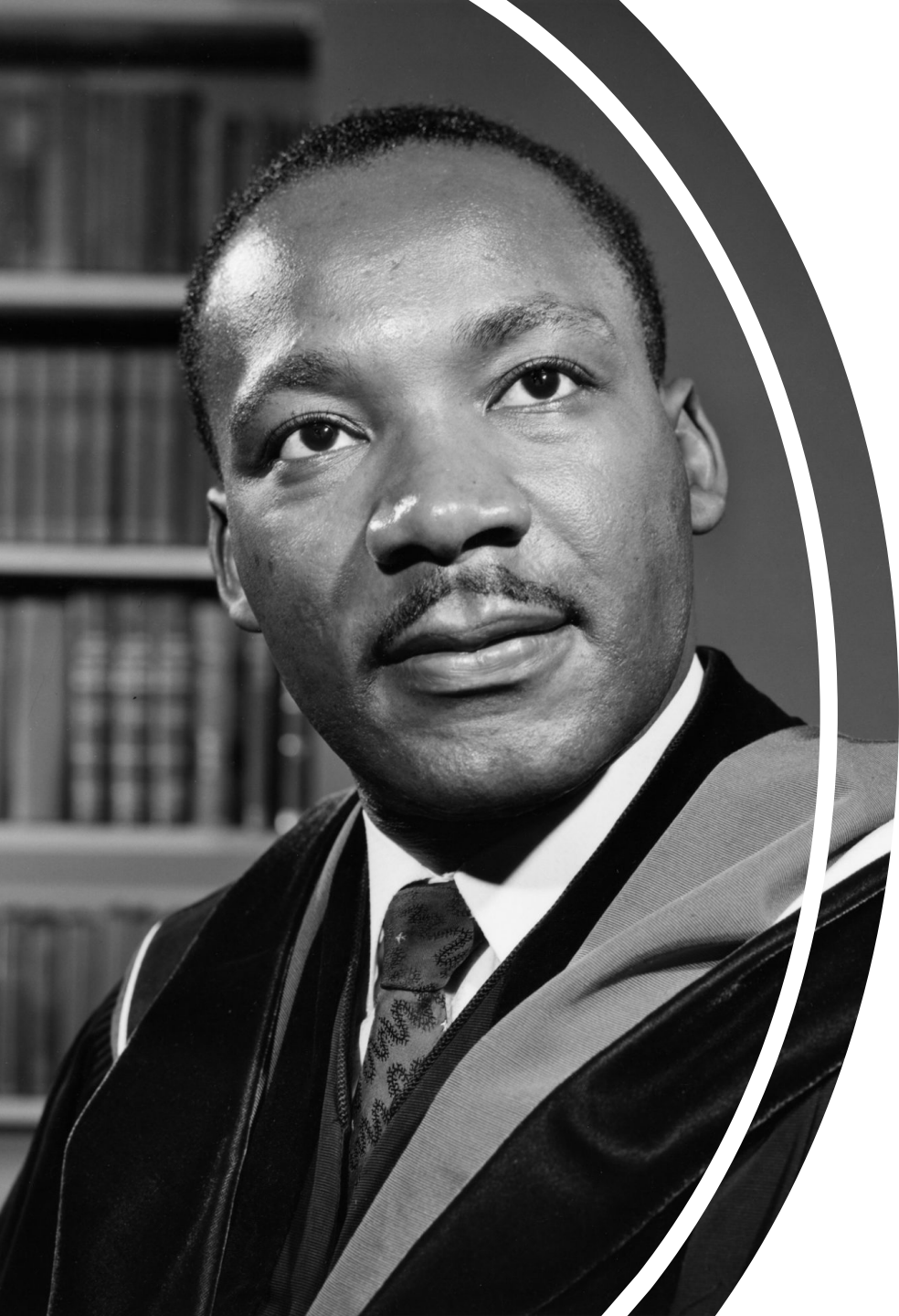


40% of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year white medical students endorsed the belief that Black people's skin is thicker than white people's (Hoffman et al., 2016).

# DISPARITIES IN MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

# U.S. POPULATION BECOMING MORE DIVERSE

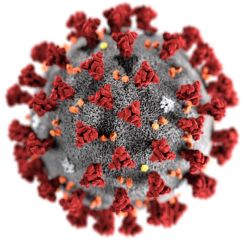




**“Of all forms of inequity,  
injustice in health care is  
the most shocking and  
inhuman.”**

**Martin Luther King, Jr., National  
Convention of the Medical  
Committee for Human Rights,  
Chicago, 1966**





# COVID-19

At a hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC on June 23, 2020, Dr Fauci was asked whether “racism itself” may be a big part of what’s driving the high coronavirus death rate in Black Americans.

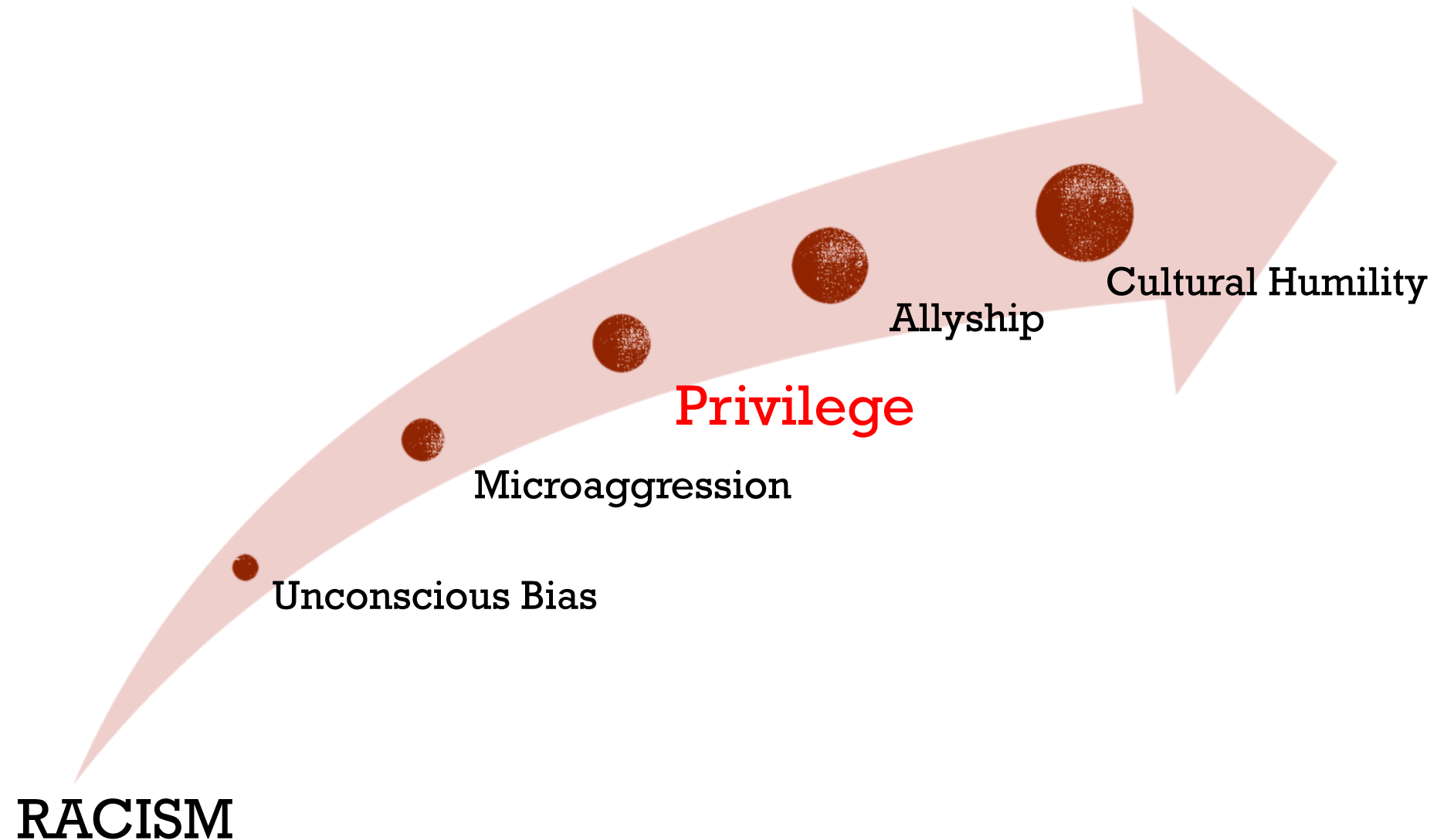
“The answer, Congressmen, is yes,” Fauci said.



# FACTORS THAT INCREASE RISK

- Discrimination
- Healthcare access and utilization
- Occupation
- Transportation
- Educational, income, and wealth gaps
- Housing
- Health Inequities

# UNDERSTANDING TERMINOLOGY AND RELATIONSHIPS



# WHAT IS PRIVILEGE?

- A special right, advantage or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group of people
- A right or benefit that is given to some people and not to others



# WHAT ARE SOME PRIVILEGES THAT PEOPLE HAVE OBSERVED OR EXPERIENCED?

**Race**

**Ethnicity**

**height**

**gender**

**religion**

**able-bodied**

**economic or social class**

**Sexual orientation**

- “It’s the level of societal advantage that comes with being seen as the norm in America, automatically conferred irrespective of wealth, gender or other factors. It makes life smoother, but it’s something you would barely notice unless it were suddenly taken away — or unless it had never applied to you in the first place.”

# WHAT IS WHITE PRIVILEGE?

# WHITE PRIVILEGE: AN EXAMPLE

A WHITE MALE WITH A CRIMINAL RECORD, IS 58% MORE LIKELY TO GET A JOB OVER A MAN OF COLOR WITH A CLEAN RECORD.



# WHITE SUPREMACY

- White supremacy does not only refer to individual white people and their individual intentions or actions but to the belief, theory, or doctrine that white people are inherently superior to people from all other racial and ethnic groups, especially Black people, and are therefore rightfully the dominant group in any society.

# OVERT WHITE SUPREMACY (Socially Unacceptable)

Lynching

Hate Crimes Swastikas

KKK

Burning  
Crosses

The N-Word

Racial Slurs

Racist Jokes

Neo-Nazis

# COVERT WHITE SUPREMACY (Socially Acceptable)

"Make America Great  
Again"

Hiring Discrimination

Police  
murdering POC

School-to-Prison  
Pipeline

Confederate  
Flags

Discriminatory Lending

Racial Profiling

Not Believing  
Experiences of POC

Mass Incarceration

Paternalism

Virtuous Victim  
Narrative

Police Brutality

Anti-Immigration  
Policies/Practices

Assuming that Good  
Intentions are Enough

Euro-centric Curriculum

Self-appointed  
White Ally

Denial of White  
Privilege

English-only Initiatives

Housing  
Discrimination

Fearing People of Color

Denial of  
Racism

Expecting POC to  
Teach White People

Believing we are  
"Post-Racial"

"Don't blame me, I  
never owned slaves"

Celebration of  
Columbus Day

"But what about me?"

"But we're just one  
human family"

Bootstrap Theory

Blaming the Victim

Cultural Appropriation

Tokenism

Racist Mascots

Claiming Reverse  
Racism

Not Challenging  
Racist Jokes

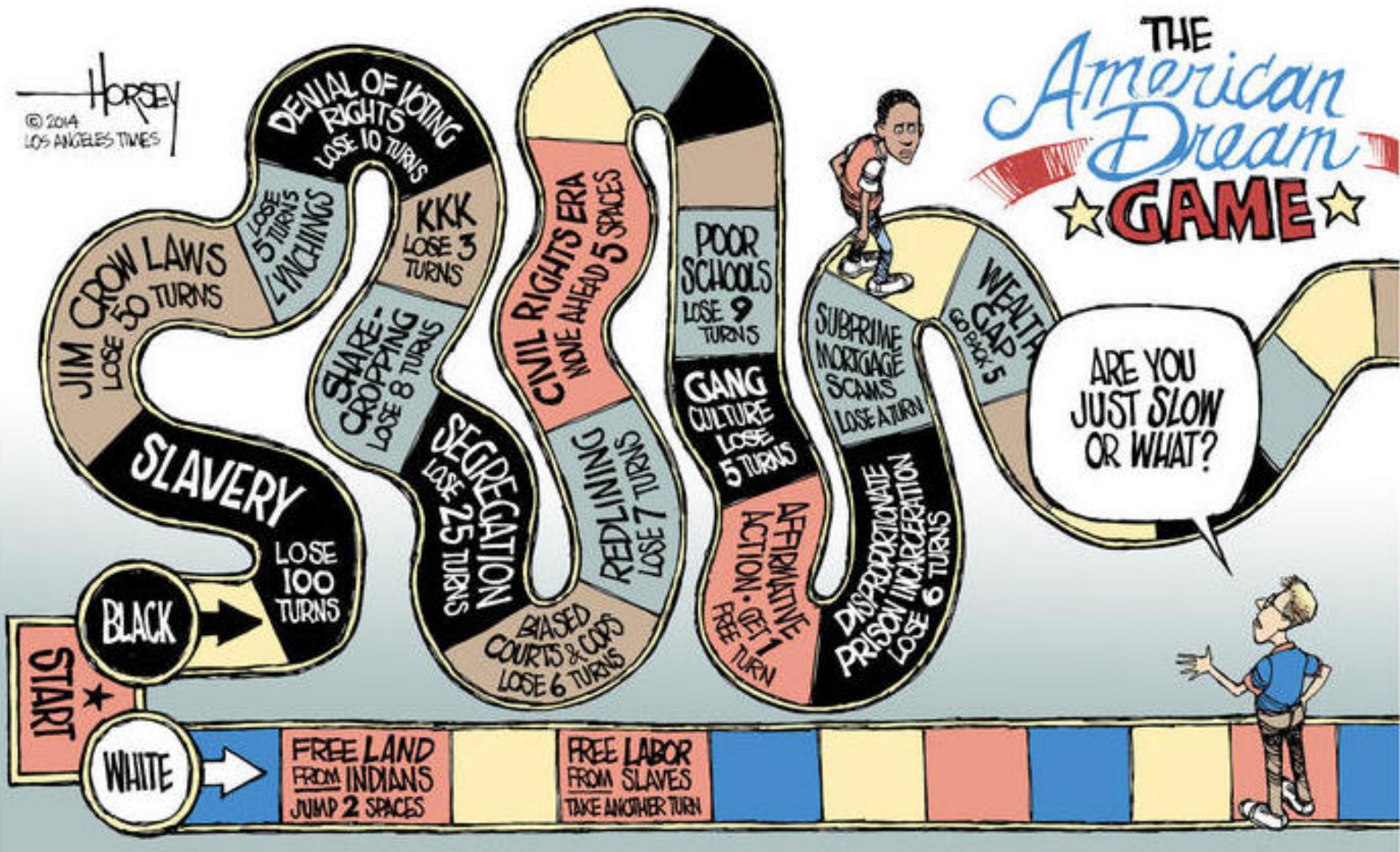
Colorblindness

"It is just a joke!"

White Savior Complex

HORSEY  
© 2014  
LOS ANGELES TIMES

# THE American Dream GAME





Described by others as  
“swimming with the  
current” or “walking with  
the wind at our back”



When privilege remains  
invisible it is difficult to  
see how it affects the  
privileged and the  
unprivileged.

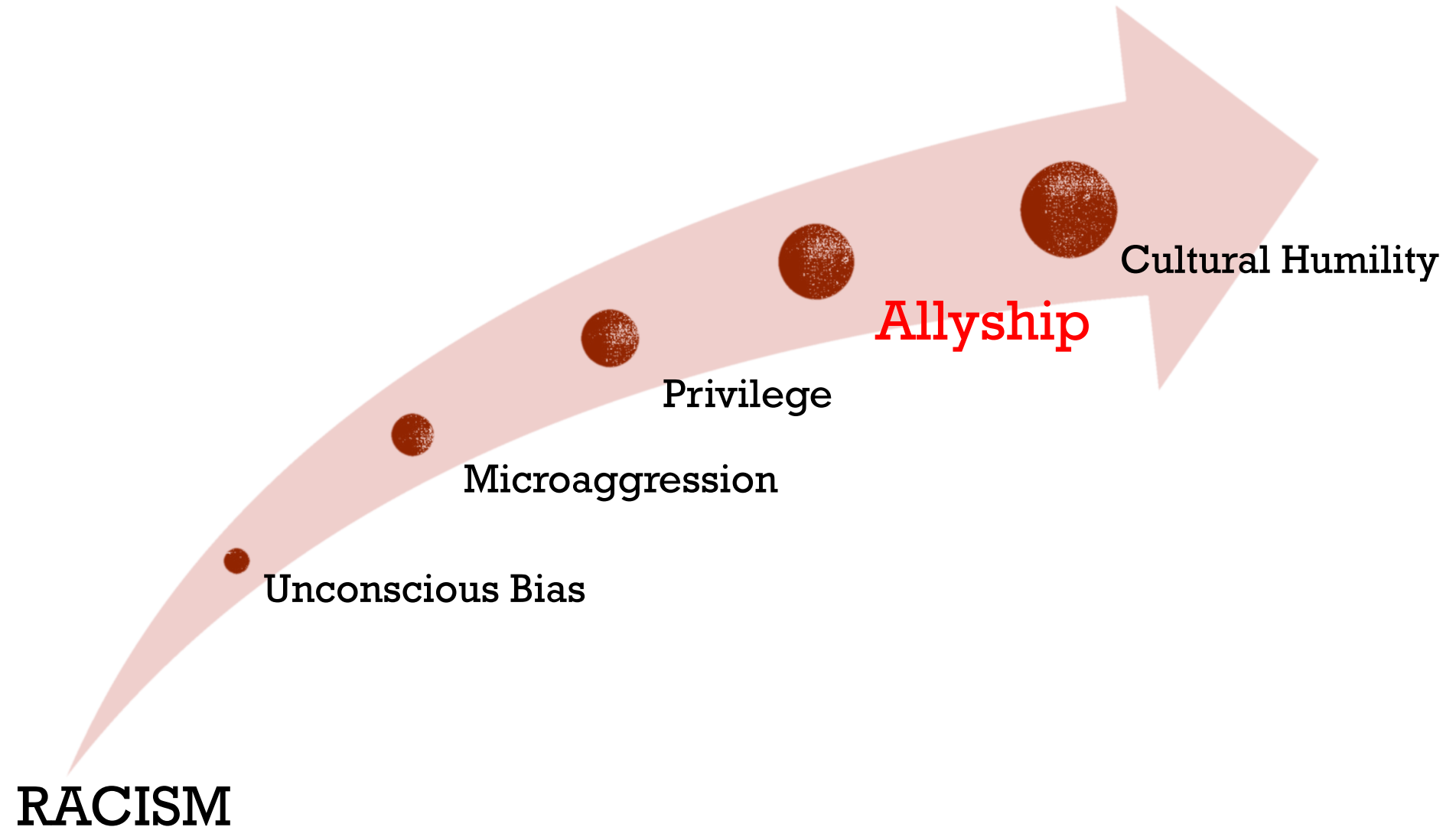


Becoming aware of privilege  
can lead to feelings of guilt  
for some

Recognizing privilege may  
help to address inequity

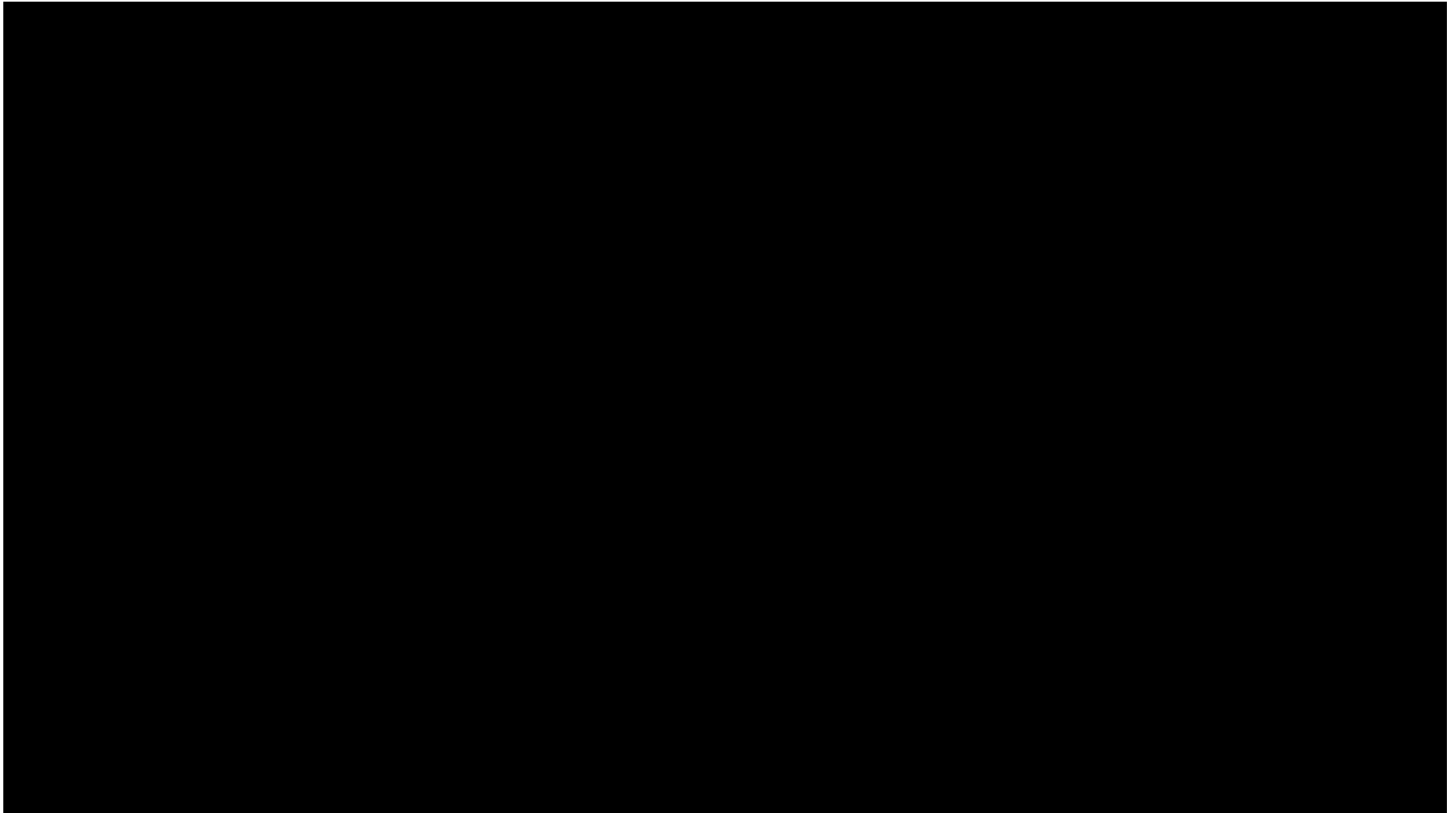
## MAKING THE CONNECTION

# UNDERSTANDING TERMINOLOGY AND RELATIONSHIPS





# WHAT CAN ALLIES DO? HERE'S ONE STORY...



- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTvU7uUgjUI>

Be willing to make mistakes, apologize, learn and try again.

Be willing to be uncomfortable and have uncomfortable conversations.

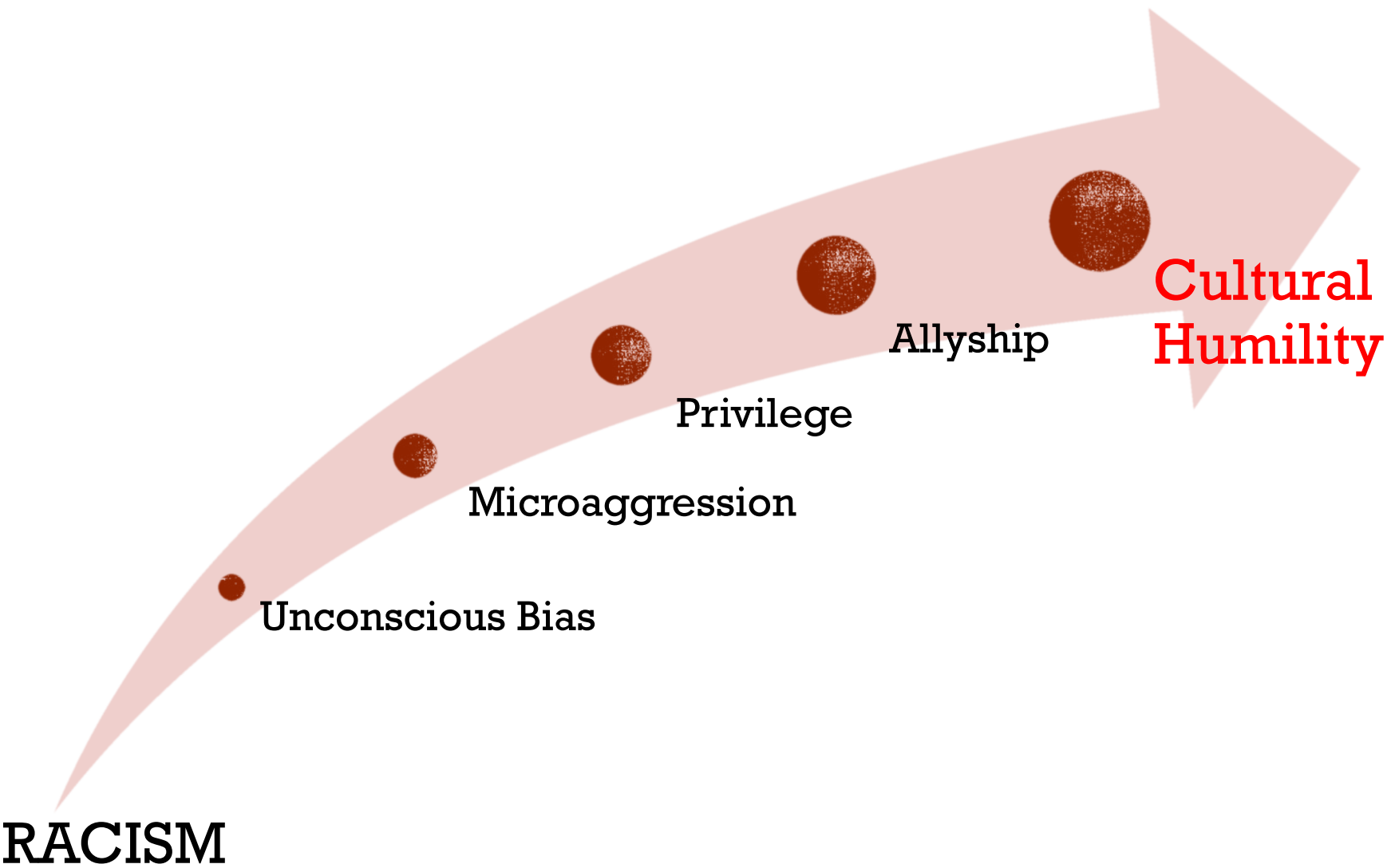
Be willing to confront your own privilege.

Be aware that you cannot always change the antagonist but you can empower and support the protagonist.

Learn how to speak up as an ally.

# HOW CAN INDIVIDUALS BECOME ALLIES?

# UNDERSTANDING TERMINOLOGY AND RELATIONSHIPS





Competence indicates a theory can be mastered



None of us can be truly “competent” in another culture



Cultural humility: Lifelong learning and critical self-reflection



“Humble reflection on how one’s knowledge is always partial, incomplete, and inevitably biased”

Acad Med. 2008; 83: 625-6

# CULTURAL COMPETENCY V. CULTURAL HUMILITY

# INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES TO REDUCE BIAS

1. Recognize bias is normal
2. Question the source of our discomfort with different groups of people
3. Engage with people in groups you don't know well/have biases
4. Get feedback when possible

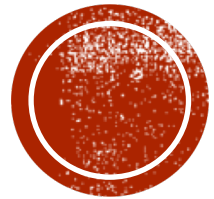
Ross, 2014

6. Individuation: focus on individual rather than group membership

Burgess, et al, 2007

# WAYS TO INTERRUPT BIAS SITUATIONS

- “Ouch”
- Repeat back what is said
- Ask for more information (*can you elaborate on that?*)
- Play dumb; challenge the stereotype (e.g. *I don't understand your joke. Can you explain it to me?*)
- Separate intent from impact
- Tell them they're too smart to say something like that
- Appeal to values and principles
- Point out policy/law that prohibits such conduct



# QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

# BLACK, INDIGENOUS, AND PEOPLE OF COLOR



- Centers the experiences of Black and Indigenous groups and demonstrates solidarity between communities of color
- Reinforces that not all people of color have the same experience, especially when it comes to legislation and systemic oppression