

PREP**Overview**

As we have more conversations around equity, diversity, inclusion, and our biases, we have to prepare for potentially awkward and uncomfortable conversations. As uncomfortable as we feel in this moment, it's important to remember the reason we are doing this work is because many of our students feel uncomfortable daily while having to navigate an educational space that means different things to different people.

Engaging in these conversations is part of the work of equity. Our silence discounts students' experiences and condones ignorance.

Objectives

- Identify and name personal fears about addressing inequity.
- Develop strategies to overcome that discomfort.
- Complete Equity Educator – Confronting Our Discomfort activity.

Required Materials

- Equity Workbook
- Pen or pencil

Mindset Connection: We are Connected, 100% Accountable

Step 1: Get Their Attention

Section	Displayed	Instructions
Opening Activity: (2 min)	“I don’t see color.”	Prompt: What do you think about this statement? Is it okay? Is it harmful? Why or why not? (Give a few educators time to respond.)
Discussion: (10 min)	“For some, the mere utterance of Black, Latinx, White, etc. must inherently mean they are racist...”	Prompt: Although most people of color grow up discussing race openly, most others who are not people of color were brought up to not notice race at all. For some, the mere utterance of Black, Latinx, White, etc. must inherently mean they are racist. The erasure of the word that names a race equates to the erasure of an important part of a person's identity. That stance implies that race is not something of which to be proud. <i>Suggestion:</i> Allow teachers time to discuss and debate.
Overview: (5 min)	What Does Discomfort Look Like? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Being “colorblind” 2. Only having the conversations with people of color (POC) 3. Discounting the experiences of groups that are not your own 	Prompt: So what does discomfort actually look like? We talked about one example: claiming to “not see color”. Some other examples are only having race conversations with students and teachers of color or discounting the experiences from groups that are not your own. Who can talk about how these are signs of discomfort and what other issues they may lead to? <i>#2 relies on people of color who are already comfortable having these conversations to do the heavy lifting. The negative impact of this is other groups never identify what they need to work on.</i> <i>#3 is a way of saying “It’s not a real issue, so I don’t need to work on it.” Again, it allows for the individual to stay away from uncomfortable conversations. The negative impact of this is that it makes those groups feel unheard, unseen, and unbelievied.</i>

“Your students will rise or fall to the level of expectations you set for them.”

Step 2: Make the Connection

Section	Displayed	Instructions
Video: (5 min)	Implicit Bias in Action Video Link	Prompt (before showing video): Here’s a video from the New York Times about white people having conversations about race. As you listen, see if any of these statements are relatable.
Discussion: (15 min)	Observe Question 1. What <i>ideas</i> in the video stuck out to you? Reflect Question 2. Which parts reminded you of your own experience? Interpret Question 3. How did hearing the reasoning for not being comfortable with the conversations make you feel? Why? Decide Question 4. What’s one thing that can make you more comfortable having these conversations?	<i>Suggestion:</i> Read “Observe” question with entire group. Have the teachers break into small groups by grade level or department for the rest of the questions. Have them discuss among themselves, and then open the discussion up to the larger group if and when appropriate. <i>Suggestion:</i> If meaningful teacher sharing is taking place, feel free to forego some of the following activities or possibly assign them as homework. <i>Suggestion:</i> It is not necessary to answer all of the questions. Choose those that are most appropriate for your group.
How It Looks in Action: (5 min)	How It Looks in Action: 1. Center the experiences of non-dominant groups in meaningful ways. (When you let your discomfort rule, you center your feelings over others’ feelings.) 2. It’s okay to say, “I don’t know” and find ways to learn together. 3. Stay away from “colorblind” language. 4. Listen more than you speak.	Prompt: Now we want to start considering strategies for getting more comfortable with these conversations. <i>Suggestion:</i> Have a teacher read the How It Looks in Action on the screen. Ask if anyone has real-life examples, but do not use students’ names.

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Step 3: Transition to Life

Section	Displayed	Instructions
Equity Workbook (10 min)	Confronting our Discomfort Activity	<p>Suggestion: Discuss Exercise #2 Confronting Our Discomfort in the <i>Equity Workbook</i>.</p> <p>Provide the teachers with a few minutes to complete the activity on their own.</p> <p>Suggestion: If time is short, teachers should complete the above <i>Equity Workbook</i> exercises on their own time prior to the next meeting.</p>
Report Out: (2-3 min)	Teacher Report	<p><i>Suggestion:</i> Facilitator leads the teachers to share what their Confronting Our Discomfort plan includes. Reports can be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlighting staff members who've taken action toward confronting their discomfort. • Sharing their fears and solutions.
Continued Learning	Continued Learning Opportunities	<p><i>Suggestion:</i> Optional (but recommended) learning opportunity to help educators become more comfortable with conversations around equity:</p> <p>Read the book <i>White Fragility</i> by Robin DiAngelo.</p>