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BJEDI
Belonging, Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion

An Organizational Guidance Workbook to Belonging, Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

This workbook is designed to give practitioners and allies a foundational understanding of diversity, including guidance to discovering the necessary priorities, strategies, and actions to build BJEDI culture in your spheres of influence.

By: Dr. L. M. McKenzie

This workbook is dedicated to my ancestors, whose resilience continues to move the waters and restore humanity. I love you.

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https://www.linkedin.com/in/linda-mckenzie-lmm2016/
https://www.linkedin.com/company/globalempathytrainingacademy/
Instagram: @imagineglobalempathy

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Graphics Provided by Canva
Author Photo by @RobWrite

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Preface
Why I Decided to Name This Workbook BJEDI

I have a confession to make. I have NEVER watched an episode, or any movie made on Star Wars. Before writing this preface, I had very limited knowledge about the film but like many, I have seen the iconic Darth Vader and heard the phrase, the Jedi Mind Trick. However, I don't know the central plot. I don't know whether the characters are fighting galactic powers in another universe or if they are fighting "stars"!

There is some concern on social media platforms about the acronym JEDI being used in diversity job and department titles. The concern is that the acronym can dilute the crucial work in this space. Thus, associating the Jedi Mind with (JEDI) Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, may make the factual work of diversity likened to a fictional Disney story. Because of this, I pondered on titling this workbook, BJEDI but ultimately decide to after a surface-level dive to gain knowledge of the Jedi Mind. My disclaimer is that I will use the descriptions on the Star Wars website to get a basic understanding. My analysis will be literal based on their descriptions and have nothing to do with the themes used in the actual story.

According to the website, a Jedi Mind Trick is described as follows:

"The Force can have a powerful effect on the weak-minded, a phenomenon Jedi sometimes take advantage of in pursuing their missions. An experienced Jedi can use the Force to implant a suggestion in the minds of those they encounter, encouraging them to comply with the Jedi's wishes."

The Star Wars website further describes the Force as "a mysterious energy field created by life that binds the galaxy together. The Force can grant users powerful abilities, it also directs their actions. And it has a will of its own, which both scholars and mystics have spent millennia seeking to understand".

From these definitions, my literal understanding is that a Jedi Mind Trick uses a force that is:

1. Oppressive, by using its power to prey on the "weak-minded".
2. Controlling, by taking advantage of others to "pursue their mission".
3. Manipulative, by "implant" (ing) their ideas in the minds to gain their desires.

Further, this force of oppression, controlling, and manipulating power is a mystery and was created by design to connect the universe. It has confused the wise and the spellbound for many years. The Force is also selective on who can use its powers but directs the actions of whoever is fortunate to receive these abilities. Finally, like humans, this force has a will of its own. In this sense, there is an opportunity to influence The Force and weaken its power to oppress, control, and manipulate others.

I shared this analysis with a few Star Wars fans who challenged my literal interpretation. Here is some feedback:

- "Your interpretation does not align with the Jedi's Force but (aligns) more like the "Dark Side", which is Darth Vader."
- "Jedi is the good side. So, the oppressive, controlling, and manipulative Jedi force that you are describing is countering the evil force of the Dark Side."

- "Describing the force as oppressive, controlling, and manipulative will offend people, especially Star Wars people."

The conviction that Jedi's are on the good side and - as many humans believe - the "The Dark Side" is evil. How has George Lucas and Disney convinced millions that preying on "weak-minded" and "taking advantage" of their weakness for self-gain is considered good? I can think of a few possibilities. First, the definition on Disney's website falls short of accurately describing a Jedi Mind Trick. Second, Star Wars fans would not or could not look at the definition in a literal sense. Finally, perhaps the Jedi Mind Trick has confused the wise and spellbound in the real world to believe that being oppressive, controlling, and manipulative is considered "good". So, I can certainly understand why some would challenge this acronym in organizational structures. In essence, what if this description fits your CEO, boss, or culture where you work?

Indeed, there is a reckoning of what is considered "good" leadership in the real world and is ever-evolving. This means that DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) is ever-evolving. DEI evolved to JEDI after the 2020 racial unrest in America, encouraging practitioners to lead DEI initiatives with Justice. Advocates believe that there is a better chance of DEI survival in the organizational structures if injustice is dismantled foremost. Thus, the social justice movement continues to place demands on organizations to be more accountable and expose the injustice happening in the workplace.

Finally, diversity practitioners now include "Belonging" as part of their strategy. One of the common goals of work for diversity practitioners is to build a culture of inclusion and belonging. In actuality, belonging cannot exist authentically without inclusion. Additionally, belonging and inclusion cannot exist authentically without justice and equity relies on justice to make systems fair for everybody. One of the goals of this workbook is to delineate each of these terms and show how they intersect and depend on one another for effective outcomes. Therefore, organizations cannot eliminate any in their strategy.

I will end with this thought. The Jedi Mind Trick is similar to the forces that colonized structures in America and caused the oppression deeply systemic in today's culture. However, the wise and the spellbound now understand that "The Force" IS a mindset. I hope that you embrace the acronym for a real-world mindset. One that uses advocacy, truth, and strategy to dismantle the oppressive, controlling, and manipulative mindset that built this America.

With that, may the BJEDI be with you.

PEER REVIEW & ENDORSEMENTS

As a sponsor for academic research papers on the topic, I find Dr. McKenzie's BJEDI workbook absolutely enlightening. She has a knack for distilling extraordinary complex constructs into a clear brief explanation, especially on how history and policy have contributed to our current societal challenges. BJEDI addresses the scope of the problem, the impact on organizations and society, and offers immersive sessions that guide strategy for sustainable solutions. One of the most unique differentiators of this workbook compared to others is how Dr. McKenzie seamlessly incorporates psychological principles of human behavior. I believe that she is making a critical contribution to both our understanding and to the organizations that work with her.

Dr. Mira Brancu
Clinical Psychologist,
Leadership Consultant,
APA Associate Editor

Dr. McKenzie's work has always been exceptional and her BJEDI workbook doesn't disappoint. It is a cutting-edge resource for anyone creating or increasing BJEDI into their strategy and culture. She takes the very complex components of belonging, justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion and simplifies an understanding of each part masterfully. Highly recommended and a vital resource for all!

Dr. Danielle Jenkins
DEI Program Manager

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"A Journey of a thousand miles begins with one step."

If you are new on this journey to build a culture of diversity and inclusion - welcome. You are not alone, and it is not too late. Some of you may be looking for a new way to strategize your goals to maximize belonging. Good for you too! Congratulations on committing to embedding BJEDI in your organizational culture.

My dissertation research studied the challenges that millennial leaders faced being promoted to executive leadership roles. In addition, I examined the best practices of Fortune 100's top U.S. companies to discover what sets them apart in leadership, besides profitability. The findings determined that the most successful companies followed three guiding principles of (a) investing heavily in people, (b) valuing DEI, and (c) empowerment with holistic leadership practices. Conversely, millennials faced three overarching challenges. First, millennials had to fight stereotypes and biases in the workplace, regardless of their capabilities. Second, millennials lacked the support in the workplace necessary to advance in executive roles. Finally, millennials lacked the opportunities desired to prove their capabilities for leadership potential.

After reflecting on my research, I made a vow to support millennials and future generations by becoming a champion to help organizational culture become more inclusive. A few short years later, the world was rocked by the increased violence happening to Black people, the AAPI, and Muslim communities. My vow expanded from helping generations to helping a vulnerable population be empowered, safe, heard, and valued. I have studied the intersections of power, race, and bias, including how opportunities for oppression manifest inside systems. This workbook is a contribution to my commitment to supporting DEI's leadership strategy.

DEI practitioners and executive leaders play a monumental role in discovering the foundational cracks in structures that are not safe. A heroic responsibility is calling out the hidden flaws that cause atrocities inside and outside corporate walls. Indeed, these tragedies are dangerous and felt worldwide. Every organization has a social responsibility to dig deeper into this work.

Intersectionality is a crucial lens necessary to guide the efforts of diversity strategy. Coined by Professor Kimberle Crenshaw, intersectionality allows us to look at how social structures create social inequality. From an organizational perspective, driving change means looking at diversity, equity, and inclusion with a multi-dimensional lens. It means digging deep in looking at policies, recruiting, hiring, retaining, and promoting practices, culture, values, etc., and how they weave into gender, race, age, religion, political affiliation, beliefs, behavior, etc. An intersectional strategy gives more freedom to identify root causes of problems and find new opportunities to build equitable support. There are brainstorm exercises within the BJEDI chapters of this workbook that are designed with an intersectional lens to help you find the best strategies and initiatives for your team, group, or enterprise.

Finally, our best advice is that you will experience more diversity in thought with a purposeful diversity of staff assigned to this project. It is okay to pause, reflect, and pivot as necessary. Just do not quit. If your team encounters barriers or conflict over the very complex topics that come with this work, please know that I am here for you.

Cheering you on,

Dr. L.M. McKenzie, CEO
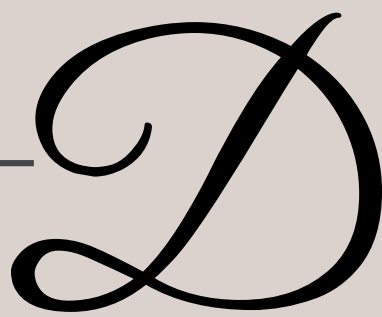
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DIVERSITY IS RELATIONAL

Your organizational efforts should *exemplify intersectionality*. Meaning, the ultimate goal of your hard work should demonstrate how the org structures can support a variety of community.

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Diversity Literature Review

INTRODUCTION

Diversity discussions have been a part of American history for decades and now permeate all sectors of work. The topic's roots began when protests erupted across America to counteract segregation and inequality. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 formally ended segregation and prohibited employment discrimination for all. Organizations began offering diversity education training in an effort to reduce discrimination claims and provide protection against lawsuits, albeit millions have since filed claims with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) for prejudice against their employers. Hence, there is greater work necessary to guarantee equal employment for all.

The Department of Defense (DoD) is noted to be one of the first agencies to actively address diversity in the United States. Under DoD Directive 1322.11, the Defense Race Relations Institute (DRRI) was established and later named the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI). The directive mandated race relations education for all military personnel to foster positive human relations throughout the agency. Although the definition has changed over time, diversity remains the foundation of their education and training programs. DEOMI defines diversity as "an understanding that our strengths derive from our differences as well as our shared values, goals, and ethics".

Like the DoD, diversity has morphed into a variety of meanings in society. Organizations, scholars, and practitioners have expanded diversity topics to intersect with subjects encompassing equity, inclusion, belonging, and justice. Unpacking and addressing each layer of these subjects is a complex, difficult, and continuous process, yet necessary to mandate law.

Diversity professionals are frequently titled with CDO, DEI, D&I, and DEIB acronyms. They are generally responsible for providing strategy and training for staff to embed values in the culture. The approach used to provide diversity training and education also varies between organizations. Discussions can start in Employee Resource Groups (ERG) and other affinity groups to bring awareness and open discussion amongst staff about race, including having difficult conversations about U.S. history and the lived experience of marginalized people at work. Unconscious Bias training is a popular topic used as a foundational education for training on diversity and comes with mixed evidence of its effectiveness.

The murder of George Floyd sparked an era of civil unrest and triple-digit growth in diversity positions in U.S. organizations. However, turnover and elimination for these positions are also at an alarming rate. The average tenure for a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) is less than two years, noting burnout, lack of support, and placing unrealistic expectations on their roles as reasons for leaving. According to a new rule announced by the Board of Education, public colleges in Florida are now prohibited from using state and federal funds on DEI initiatives. Other states are following the ban of DEI, leading to hundreds of jobs being eliminated. Thus, diversity initiatives and strategies are constantly pivoting to thrive.

DIVERSITY DEFINED

To guide strategic priorities, organizations will need to define their meaning and understanding of diversity. Generally, increasing efforts that are concentrated on simply hiring a certain race and/or gender does not necessarily equate to a successful diversity strategy. Diversity has a much broader meaning and analyzing its significance will yield a greater understanding. A goal of organizations using a diversity strategy is to hire a considerable variety of people of different ethnicities, experiences, backgrounds, etc., all with a diverse variety of thought. Below, are a few examples of how diversity is defined in society that you can analyze, iterate, and/or adopt for your organization.

Diversity defined in academia "refers to the variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geographic region, and more." This definition clearly shows the broad spectrum of diversity. Additionally, an intersection of the diversity differences with topics of equity, inclusion, belonging, and justice will uncover areas of focus for the organization-wide strategy or within departments of the enterprise. (Continued)

DIVERSITY

Definitions in corporate America are mainly limited to statements that support diversity as a social responsibility. This can leave gaps in how organizations develop strategies to build a diverse community of people. Walmart defines diversity as "the unique identities, experiences, styles, abilities, and perspectives of our workforce, reflecting communities we serve." Walmart's definition aligns the workforce to the communities they serve. However, it leaves a reader to make assumptions about the 'communities they serve'. One assumption can be made that Walmart only hires employees that reflect their customers.

James Wright, Head of Global Diversity at Google defines diversity as,
"the similarities and differences of people found in our workforce, our customers, and in the community in which we serve. Diversity includes many characteristics that may be visible such as race, gender, and age, and it also includes less obvious characteristics like personality style, ethnicity, ability, education, religion, job function, life experience, lifestyle, sexual orientation, gender identity, geography, regional differences, work experience, and family situation that make us similar to and different from one another."

Like Walmart, Wright's definition aligns the workforce and community. The exception is that Wright's definition focuses on similarities and differences, whereas Walmart's definition may make a reader believe that the workforce and community mirror one another – meaning that there are no differences between them.

At Global Empathy Training Academy, we define diversity as the condition that symbolizes the unique elements and qualities of an individual, group, or organization. When looking at the unique elements, the focus should examine the components, ingredients, factors, features, and concerns that make up an individual, group, or organization. When looking at the unique qualities, the focus should examine the traits, characteristics, attributes, virtues, and concerns of an individual, group, or organization. This workbook is designed to help flesh out how to use the unique elements and qualities to build a diversity strategy and goals.

CONCLUSION
There is a popular colloquial that considers the thought of diversity likened to being invited to a dance. As a diversity practitioner, you'd want to consider the wide range of possibilities for your invitations. Will your organization limit invitations of employment or engagement to those who look like and think like them? Will you exclude invites to anyone outside of your territory? Will graduates from prestigious universities receive VIP invitations to the dance? These are a few of many critical questions to keep at the forefront of thought when prioritizing a long-term strategic approach to diversity. Diversity requires organizations to open the invite list to lots of possibilities. We recommend that you think broadly about the topic and narrow your scope of priorities as you gain knowledge of its complexity. In essence, make sure that your infrastructure can support a safe place for your invites. Otherwise, you may encounter what is now being defined as The Great Resignation.

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DIVERSITY

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Diversity Brainstorm Exercise #1 - ELEMENTS OF PEOPLE

The goal of the following exercises will help you to flesh out the meaning of diversity for your organization. Upon completion, your team should discover the desired priorities and strategies of focus.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please download Poll Everywhere app on your electronic device or visit the website at https://www.polleverywhere.com/ to participate in a live online ranking survey.

⊕ Respond at PollEv.com/ YourNameHere

Brainstorm Exercise #1 - ELEMENTS OF PEOPLE *

ETHNICITY (A particular ethnic affliation or group expression)

NATIONALITY (national character; a legal relationship involving allegiance on the part of an individual)

RACE (physical or biogentic traits such as skin color)

GENDER IDENTITY (A person's deeply-felt, inherent sense of being a man or woman or an alternative gender)

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE (Hair texture, garments, body size, etc)

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (Impairment in physical, learning, language, or behavior areas)

U.S. PERMANENT RESIDENT (someone granted authorization to live and work in the US on a permanent basis)

IMMIGRANT (a person who migrates to another country, usually for permanent residence)

EXPATRIATE (to leave one's native country to live elsewhere)

* **A SAMPLE OF THE ACTIVITY. CAN BE USED AS A GUIDE**

Powered by 📊 Poll Everywhere

Make a list of 'elements' of people using the Ranking activity in Poll Everywhere. Next, rank each element in order of priority using the Upvote activity in Poll Everywhere. Finally, facilitate a discussion on what why the chosen elements are priority. For example, why should 'race' and 'gender' be a strategic priority? Is it because your organization could better represent a particular race and/or gender in their senior leadership? Do the same for the remainder exercises.

Notes:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Diversity Brainstorm Exercise #2 - QUALITIES OF PEOPLE

Respond at PollEv.com/YourNameHere ✱

Brainstorm Exercise #2 - QUALITIES OF PEOPLE

LIVED EXPERIENCE (UPBRINGING, SOCIAL STATUS, EDUCATION, ETC)

PERSONALITY (INTROVERT, EXTROVERT, AMBIVERT, AGREEABLENESS, CONSCIENTIOUSNESS, NEUROTICISM, WARM, EMPATHIC, ETC)

CHARACTER (AUTHENTIC, COURAGEOUS, HONEST, COMPASSIONATE, ETHICAL, VIRTUOUS, WISDOM, ETC)

ORIGINALITY (CREATIVE, NONCONFORMING, INNOVATORS, DISRUPTORS, GENERATORS, ETC)

UNIQUENESS (Distinctive, Unusual, Peculiar, Special, Eccentric, etc)

SKILLS/CAPABILITIES (LITERACY, LANGUAGE, TECHNICAL, INTERPERSONAL, PROBLEM-SOLVING, CIVILITY, ETC.)

✱ A SAMPLE OF THE ACTIVITY CAN BE USED AS A GUIDE

Powered by Poll Everywhere

After ranking the qualities of people in order of strategic priority for the upcoming year:

- Facilitate a discussion on what why the chosen qualities are a priority. For example, how can an eccentric person with problem-solving skills bring impact to the team and/or organization.

Notes:

Diversity Brainstorm Exercise #3 - Intersectionality

DIVERSITY DEEP DIVE DISCUSSION: INTERSECTIONALITY

Congratulations! You should have rich data that will help determine what elements and qualities are your priority of focus. In this section, you will intersect the elements and qualities to determine the goals for diversity. After ranking the 'elements' and 'qualities' in order of strategic priority for the upcoming year:

- Place the top 3-5 elements and the top 3-5 qualities in the chart below.
- Use the following questions on the following page to flesh out how these elements and qualities intersect with your organization.

ELEMENTS:	QUALITIES:
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

Notes:

DIVERSITY DEEP DIVE DISCUSSION: INTERSECTIONALITY

- Facilitate a discussion on what why the chosen elements and qualities are a priority. For example, why should 'race' and 'gender' be a strategic priority? Is it because your organization could better represent a particular race and/or gender in their senior leadership?
- Use the following questions to flesh out how these elements and qualities intersect with your organization.

1. How does your organization define diversity?

2. Discuss the positive impact that diversity has on the staff, the organizational culture, and on society.

3. What intersections of elements and qualities are critical for demonstrating diversity in your organization this year? For example, how would the intersection of the 'elements' of race and strategy intersect with the 'qualities' of life experience, core values, and commitment bring positive impact to the team or enterprise? Practice intersecting various elements and qualities for discussion on impact.

4. How can your organization teach and demonstrate diversity with short-term wins? For example, invite SME to your ERGs/Affinity Groups to offer 'Lunch & Learn' opportunities on diversity topics. Make a list of your ideas using the Discussion activity in Poll Everywhere.

5. What is the pain scale of teaching and demonstrating diversity in your organization? For example, within each department, determine the comfort/discomfort level foreseen in C-Suite, HR, L&D, and Legal departments.

6. How can your organization mitigate unhealthy conflict and/or distress?

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INCLUSION IS ACTUAL

Your organizational efforts should *certify capacity*. Meaning, the ultimate goal of your hard work should inform with certainty the potential for appreciating and safely accommodating everyone's experiences.

Inclusion Literature Review

INTRODUCTION

The concept of inclusion initially began in research through educational psychology and gender studies and then merged with diversity as an organizational topic in the early 21st century. Organizations commonly associated Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) with the Affirmative Action programs of the 1960s when the federal government instructed their agencies to act toward expanding job opportunities for minorities and treating everyone equally. The purpose of Affirmative Action was to hire competent people regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. In contrast, one of the many purposes of D&I is to show how our similarities and differences enhance business and productivity. Hence, Affirmative Action focuses on helping agencies ignore our differences and enforce the law, whereas D&I focuses on embracing our differences and the value added to the workplace.

A major downfall of Affirmative Action is the perception that minorities were thought of as 'less than' others – a harmful historical message used to justify slavery. Affirmative Action encouraged people to use racial color blindness when hiring but was commonly perceived as a method to employ minorities who were not qualified for positions. Thus, Affirmative Action gave D&I a competitive disadvantage for a business case in that it made people believe that minorities were given a favorable benefit that was discriminating against white people. Consequently, organizations fought Affirmative Action at the Supreme Court with some large victories.

In 2005, the Chancellor of UC Berkeley wrote a public letter called, The Meaning of Inclusion. This letter was prompted by the passing of California's Proposition 209, which abolished all public-sector affirmative action programs in employment, education, and contracting. The university experienced a significant decline in acceptance rates from minority students and the Chancellor believed that it caused alienation, mistrust, and division on campus. Although the letter did not attempt to formally define inclusion, it factually showed the consequences of exclusion. The Chancellor aligned the meaning of inclusion to leadership and excellence to feel a moral obligation to address the concerns of exclusion head-on.

The Chancellor's letter is important to show the relationship of how the passing of Prop 209 against Affirmative Action gave D&I a competitive disadvantage. In a freshman class of 30,000 students, UC Berkeley admitted 108 African American freshmen after Proposition 209 passed. This is a tragic consequence of exclusion. The intrinsic value of inclusion puts a moral obligation on employers to make it a strategic priority. We want you to keep this example in mind when you build your inclusion strategies. What would be the consequences of having little to no representation of a class of people within your company or department? Also, think about the sheer pressure of one minority in the company or department who is asked to speak on behalf of the entire population. Some practices may seem inclusive but can be viewed as actively hostile. A goal of organizations using inclusion is to build spaces for people to flourish. Developing strategies, policies, and practices that keep everyone safe is crucial and a large factor of inclusion.

INCLUSION DEFINED

There is a need to delineate the differences between diversity and inclusion and to substantiate their value in organizational culture. Having diversity strategies that are not inclusive will not work. Inclusion leverages the strength of diversity to showcase how our differences make companies exceptional. Any approach that encourages us to ignore our differences oftentimes heightens bias.

Amazon defines inclusion as "being valued, trusted, connected, and informed so that we can deliver the best results for our customers". Amazon derived this definition by launching a global internal survey that asked its employees about the meaning of inclusion. The company uses this definition to inform its strategies to build inclusive teams. Although the definition is broad, it gives diversity practitioners a starting point to develop initiatives. For example, Amazon can start discussions on what practices can be put in place that will make staff feel valued, trusted, connected, and informed. They can also look at common threads in the survey to discover themes used to describe being "connected" or "informed". (Continued

INCLUSION

Kathleen Hogan, Chief People Officer at Microsoft believes that the true definition of inclusion happens when employees feel they can thrive, have great careers, and can be their authentic selves. Microsoft is blazing the trail in building an inclusive culture on a global scale. They provide a public report annually on their diversity efforts and offer a complimentary library of short lessons on inclusion for anyone to view.

At Global Empathy Training Academy, we define inclusion as a practice of a variety of integrative approaches that will leverage diversity and demonstrate the dignity of an individual. In chapter one, we talked about the complexities of diversity and the ways that it intersects with other topics and leadership. The intersection of diversity and inclusion is tight, and they overlap in many areas. What are some integrative approaches that your organization can demonstrate to your employees that you respect them? It can be as simple as giving everyone in the meeting an opportunity to speak or providing comprehensive health benefits to your staff. What other practices can you put in place where employees feel that they can thrive and be their authentic selves? This workbook is designed to help you discover how your employees feel about inclusion. It will guide you through a discovery of integrative approaches that will leverage diversity and demonstrate an inclusive culture.

CONCLUSION

Until recently, D&I has been synonymous in literature. Indeed, they are a dynamic duo but separate in meaning and unsuccessful without each other. Organizations will need to strategize for both. In a true sense, diversity focuses on the who, while inclusion on the how. The business imperatives of D&I argue a good case for why they should be strategic priorities.

Using the same colloquial of diversity as being invited to a dance, inclusion is described as someone asking you to dance with them. Imagine the joy or sorrow of wanting an invite and not receiving one. What about those who should have received an invite and did not? How about being invited to a party where everyone is having fun with one another, but you are on the sideline watching and invisible to the crowd? Imagine being the one who is different at the party and having to dance alone because no one asks. Or having a mediocre task of watching everyone's personal belongings while they go off and have fun without you. All these scenarios describe why diversity will not work alone. Diversity opens the door to an opportunity to invite others to actively become a part of the mission. Thus, diversity is a strategy to change who is in the room, while inclusion is a strategy to change the practices and behaviors that are in the room. Inclusion drives how to utilize strategies to build a safe culture of belonging.

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Inclusion Brainstorm - Examination of Inclusion

Through discovery, examine areas where inclusion is tangible.

- Is diversity leadership included in overall strategic planning sessions held at the executive level?

- Is your organization open to BJEDI training and included in board room discussions or executive strategic planning sessions?

- What are some real stories of inclusivity within the organization?

- Are inclusion stories difficult to capture as testimony (individual and group) throughout the organization?

- How can your organization begin to foster inclusion through your strategic priorities?

- How can your organization mitigate fragility and/or distress?

INCLUSION DEEP DIVE DISCUSSION: DETERMINING GOALS

Through the strategic priorities, write goals for appreciating and accommodating the life experiences that exist in our individuality.

(EXAMPLE) Goal 1:

In creating inclusion, the efforts should show unity with concerns over racial hate.

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EQUITY IS FACTUAL

Your organizational efforts should *quantify equality*. Meaning, the ultimate goal of your hard work should fully reveal bias.

GLOBAL EMPATHY
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Equity Literature Review

INTRODUCTION

A theory of social inequity was introduced into research and organizational structures by Behavioral Psychologist, J. Stacy Adams in the 1960s. Often referred to as the "Theory of Equity", Adams' work gave special consideration to pay inequity derived from work and greatly influenced corporate thought. His research was inspired by the theory of cognitive dissonance, which describes how people become psychologically uncomfortable with competing thoughts. In simple but not exact comparisons, cognitive dissonance can be associated with today's training topics on unconscious bias, fight or flight responsiveness, and white fragility.

Adams' theory of social inequity is based on perception rather than logic. In essence, our thoughts matter more than reason. The focus involves a relationship of exchange, where an individual gives something, called inputs, and consequently expects something in return, called outputs. The inputs are described as a person's education, intelligence, experience, training, seniority, age, sex, ethnic background, social status, job effort, personal appearance, health, and spouse's characteristics. An individual's outputs are described as pay, intrinsic rewards, benefits, perks, status, working conditions, monotony, and fate. For example, if an individual expects to receive additional pay and perks (outputs) for their intelligence and social status (inputs), the individual will have a perception of inequity if their expectations are not met. Conversely, inequity ensues if an employer perceives, for example, that women are not beneficial for hire and consistently offers them lower pay than men. Hence, the perception of inequity lies in our ideologies and therefore encourages power to rule inequity instead of justice.

Notice that many of the inputs that are described in the equity theory are the same characteristics used to define diversity in Chapter 1. Also, notice the emergence of Adams' theory emergence at the height of the civil rights movement, a time when people were fighting segregation – a system that perpetuated inequity in health, wealth, and education. This is why BJEDI is so complex, fluid, and intersectional. Each component can and will overlap with movements in time, laws, personal experiences, perceptions, etc. Therefore, much of the work in equity strategy will be unlearning, learning, and closing gaps that continue to harm people.

To better understand the concept of inequity, Adams' theory purposefully refrained from what he called the 'higher order' inequities that promote social justice. Consequently, Adams' did not specifically discuss the pay inequities that exist between races. Academia, scholars, practitioners, and publishers are now engaged in the work of addressing these gaps because of race, including the historical harm. Efforts to realize inequity are now logical, considered a social justice responsibility and supported by public demand for accountability.

Academia is responding to these demands with public apologies. The American Psychology Association (APA[1]) is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States. APA[1] recently publicized an apology for their complicity in promoting systemic inequities, in part by advancing research articles that harmed people of color. As well, the American Psychiatric Association (APA[2]), which is the oldest national physician association in the country, published a public apology noting that the early psychiatric practices laid the groundwork for the inequities ingrained in the structure of psychiatric practice. APA[2] acknowledges that the inequities that were put in place many years ago, continue to harm people of color even today. Finally, large academic and prestigious universities like Harvard and Princeton have also made public apologies and taken steps to address their contribution to inequity.

Some people think that equity and equality are the same or may not understand how they differ. As diversity and inclusion work together, equity reinforces equality to address the many areas where disparity can exist. In essence, equality is weak and insufficient for justice without accountability and support from equity. They need one another to ensure that people are treated fairly.

On one hand, equality ensures that everyone is given the same resources. In simple conditions, equality would give the same pay to everyone working the same job or give everyone a 15-minute break for every few hours of work. On the other hand, equity recognizes that fairness is not met with equality alone and therefore provides additional support to either create or restore justice. For example, say two people were hired by the same employer. The building at work has no elevator and one of the hired employees uses a wheelchair. In this example, equity realizes that the two employees don't have equal access to work and will create a system to support the employee who requires a wheelchair for their mobility. This may be done in a variety of ways.

EQUITY

For example, the employee may be allowed to work from home. The employer will need to provide the resources to accommodate working from home. The employer may also make the first floor accessible for them to work at the office, give extended or additional breaks, or find a building that will support wheelchairs.

EQUITY DEFINED

Equity has been defined in various ways through a variety of lenses. APA[1] defines equity as "providing resources according to the need to help diverse populations achieve their highest state of health and other functioning. Equity is an ongoing process of assessing needs, correcting historical inequities, and creating conditions for optimal outcomes by members of all social identity groups." APAs[1] definition addresses the social justice gap in Adams' theory of social inequity. The focus is not on the "perception" of inequity but the actions that show accountability to equality and justice.

Equity Literacy Institute (ELI) defines equity as "about individuals, relationships, and systems. is one in which we value and honor each person for who they are and provide the structures, environment, and resources each person needs to fully participate and reach their greatest potential. Equitable organizations see their role in and contribute to the long-term impact of creating a more just world." Again, ELI presents equity as a required action rather than a perception.

At Global Empathy Training Academy, we define equity as the actionable obligation to support equality and justice. Indeed, equity mandates accountability. Your organizational efforts in equity strategy should quantify equality and hold leadership accountable for inequitable outcomes. The ultimate goal of your hard work should fully reveal disparity.

CONCLUSION

Achieving equity will likely be one of the most difficult components but arguably should be one of the highest priorities. Equity cannot be dismissed or replaced with equality in DEI settings. Inequity lives in the structures and systems of organizations that affect culture. Over time, inequities cause tension and weaken the moral foundation, which results in lawsuits and credibility. Using the dance colloquial, equity's role is to make sure that the structure where the dance is being held is ethically sound. Think of ways that you can use equity in party planning. Will you use certified minority business owners for party supply purchases? Some of the crucial organizational strategies focus on pay, health, education, and cultural equity. This workbook is designed to help you examine the facts about inequity in your organization and determine the priorities to support or repair the structures that can corrupt the culture over time. The implication of enforcing equity is sustainability.

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EQUITY

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Equity Brainstorm - Exploration of Discovery

Use the following to discover the facts about equity within your organization.

- Name all the places in your organization where bias can exist? Start with this group. Do you have a good representation of diversity on your team? Bias can exists if your team is a dominant race, gender or if you all work on a team from the same department.

- What do the facts reveal about people of color working in executive leadership? What about the corporate boardroom?

- What is the factual historical data of equality for recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion in your organization? What are the attrition rates by race and gender within your organization. How many grievance's for discrimination have gone to arbitration. Can you examine the complaints and work backwards to find any commonalities.

- How can you eliminate potential bias in the decision-making stages for hiring? For example, is diversity represented in HR in the recruitment or selection process? Can you examine the algorithms of the ATS software to ? Who is writing the job descriptions and interview questions? Is the scoring system for a panel interview fair? Can you examine the history of scoring for interviewers & how they intersect with race and/or gender?

- What is the pain scale of teaching and demonstrating equity in your organization? For example, determine the comfort level for training topics focused on institutional equity, racial equity, health equity, gender equity, and pay equity.

- How can your organization mitigate unhealthy conflict and/or distress?

EQUITY DEEP DIVE DISCUSSION: DETERMINING GOALS

Through the strategic priorities, write down several goals for demonstrating equity.

(EXAMPLE) Goal 1:

In creating equity, the efforts should quantify equality in health benefits packages between marriages, partnerships, LBGTQ+, and other relationships. Benefits for IVF, Surrogacy, and/or Gender Reassignment Surgery should be equal. Employer matching contributions for equity advocacy organizations.

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JUSTICE IS RENEWAL

Your organizational efforts should *ratify accountability*. Meaning, the ultimate goal of your hard work should formally sanction a willingness to accept responsibility for failure to exercise care.

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Justice Literature Review

INTRODUCTION

Tracing justice back to its roots would be a monumental task. Discussions in the literature regarding the topic date back around 380 BC during the Classical period of Ancient Greece with the writings of Plato. The Republic was Plato's greatest work on the topic of justice and ethics, where the philosopher defined the terms for the individual and society as a human virtue of the soul. Plato argues a virtue that is based on eudaemonism: a system of ethics where a person uses virtue through moral thought and conduct to achieve happiness and well-being. An important dichotomy is that Plato's view of justice did not include equality.

Concepts of justice emerged universally through religious theology about two thousand years ago. By the 18th century, philosophers tied justice to nonreligious, scientific, and political conceptions. Evidence of an apparent gap in the doctrine was unmistakable by the 20th century, noting the reality of suppressing the political and human rights of many people. For example, everyone was not given the right to vote or the right to own property. Further, The Constitution of the United States of America (1787) and the Bill of Rights (1791) were both written during slavery and were not inclusive of enslaved people (Black people were considered as property), denying Black people justice or any human rights.

Modern-day literature divides justice into three major parts. First, is distributive justice, which involves how goods and wealth should be allocated in society. Next, is retributive justice, which focuses on the punishment when the law is violated. Finally, procedural justice focuses on the perceived fairness and the process in which decisions are made.

Distributive, retributive, and procedural practices give rise to ethical questions of equity and fairness in many settings. There is considerable evidence of a broken judicial system from its inception in the United States, which has led to convictions, death, and punishment of innocent people. Additionally, the evolution of policing began with the colonization of America. Europeans used brutal militia forces to take American land from Indigenous people starting in 1492. Unimaginable cruelty was also used in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade in the 1600-the 1700s. By the late 1680s, a law was passed that gave white people rights to enforce the rule by capturing and punishing enslaved runaways, leading to the lynching of countless Black people.

When justice failed and immoral leaders were not being held accountable or punished, activists began lobbying the government, resisting the status quo, and protesting for change. From Abolitionists Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglas to Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton of the Women's Suffrage to Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King of the 1960s Civil Rights movement, cries for justice reverberated across America. These outcries led to emancipation, the 19th Amendment, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In essence, justice was amended because of leaders like these and their support system. These examples are intricately connected to the social justice movements that we experience today.

The voices of advocates today are magnified because of social media. Leaders from an elementary age are flooding government and social media timelines to change policies on gun violence, global warming, and racism. The motto leading today's protest of injustice is, "No Justice, No Peace" – making it clear that there will be no rest in a system that is inconsiderate of fairness. Disrupting and dismantling systems that allow injustice to thrive are the protest demands. This chapter will focus on two of the following most active systems of justice connected to BJEDI and instrumental in supporting equity: Social Justice and Restorative Justice.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

There is no absolute resolution or framework used to define or guide social justice, thus allowing vast fluidity in the current movement. The term has been described as a virtue, a moral obligation, a collective responsibility, an expectation, an action, advocacy, activism, and politically necessary for economic justice. Pedagogy on social justice emerged in the literature in the late 20th century with central themes that appeal to human dignity, equitable distribution of resources, equal opportunities, and fair punishment for those in power positions that break the law by harming vulnerable populations. The required change from social justice advocacy is the action necessary to obtain freedom from oppression.

JUSTICE

The United States' policing system is a notable example of how the social justice movement led to changes in the laws and corporate systems. Although today's officers are sworn to protect and serve, there have been countless extremes of policing that violate the law and go unpunished, starting with video footage of the Los Angeles Police Department's brutality against Rodney King in 1991. The police officers involved were acquitted, and the verdict sparked protests throughout Los Angeles. Almost 30 years later, one of the most hopeful changes came with the conviction of former Minneapolis police officer, Derek Chauvin for murdering George Floyd. People around the globe responded in unity after witnessing the murder on social media. As a result, twenty-five states and Washington, D.C. amended and introduced laws that restricted or clarified the types of force permitted by police officers. Corporations answered with monetary support to advocacy organizations and included topics of equity and justice as part of professional development for employees. These examples show the crucial role of the social justice movements, albeit great work is still necessary to root out injustice in society.

The fundamental role of social justice is interdisciplinary and continually transforming. However, the core values hold distributive, procedural, and retributive practices accountable for their acts of injustice. Social justice activists and allies understand that injustice is deeply systemic and rooted in America's history. Consequently, social justice confronts systems directly and proposes more in-depth questions to address the root causes of problems like the following:

- How many other incidents of police brutality have been reported without incidence?
- Where are the gaps in laws that allow excessive use of force in policing?
- Are police officers trained and equipped to oversee all 911 calls, including those involving mental health?
- Should police departments be defunded, and monies reallocated to behavioral health, social work, and other agencies?
- Should there be a federal ruling on policing and body cameras?
- Are officers being trained with methodologies designed decades ago?
- Are applicants evaluated for implicit bias and racism?

There are many more questions, but none that can morally justify the brutality at the hands of police officers. Indeed, these cultures are contagious and now infiltrate organizational structures globally. Regrettably, this culture can appear asymptomatic in many arenas.

Practitioners have an opportunity to incorporate strategy inside their structures using social justice. Because of the flexibility of social justice and its groundbreaking global movement, we will reserve our opportunity to formally define it. We believe that organizational justice involves underrepresented employees' experiences within the structures and the work required to restore harm caused by injustice to anyone. The strategy involves actions that respond compassionately and nonviolently to inequality, inequity, unfair treatment (physical and psychological abuse), and hate.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

How do we begin to restore harm in a world with so much pain? How do we begin to acknowledge the truth and correct the wrongs of America's past? Where do we begin? The answer is simple. We just begin. We can begin with a commitment to start the deep work that will lead to exposing harm, building trust, reconciling and restoring relationships, and healing trauma from the experiences.

The social justice movement has increased conversations inside organizations about -isms and ideologies that exist in the workplace culture. The discussions have magnified interpersonal conflict, giving rise to denial, anger, guilt, shame, and blame. The damage caused by these experiences can be from a micro to a macro level, nevertheless, traumatic over time. There has been a history of ignoring the comments spoken at work like, "How did you get this job?" or "You don't talk Black" – believing that these remarks are unintentional and harmless.

However, these microaggressions are commonly described as, death by a thousand paper cuts for a reason. The frequent verbal, behavioral, or situational shame can, and does, cause severe physical and emotional damage over time. On a macro level, the behavior can be illegal with charges like sexual harassment and

discrimination, when overlooked. The traditional and typical disciplinary action for macro-level violations is suspension but organizations struggle to find the most effective disciplinary actions for micro-level offenses.

Restorative justice (RJ) is an alternative process of procedural practice to resolving disputes at work. RJ emerged largely in the U.S. juvenile and criminal justice systems as a victim-offender mediation process in the late 1970s. The practices expanded to conferencing and circles of dialogue that are popular in Employee Resource Groups and community town hall settings. RJ can be incorporated as an alternative to conflict resolution inside teams and replace the traditional arbitration process in the employment process. Unlike the regular arbitration system, RJ promotes practices that build trust and give voice to the parties involved.

There are many models created to advance RJ in society. One of the most popular models to date was established in 1993 by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa and used to uncover the atrocities committed during the apartheid era in South Africa. By 2002, The United Nations endorsed a declaration of basic principles on the use of RJ programs and followed with a published handbook on RJ programs in 2006.

Unlike the traditional legal system, restorative practices give voice to the participants involved, including the agreement on the punishment, future prevention, and remedies. RJ may be satisfied with a sincere demonstration of understanding the offense through dialogue, assuming responsibility, and apologizing for the harm caused. The victim is (generally) satisfied when they receive genuine answers to questions that led to the offense. Punishment can also include formal written warnings and job probation for the offender. Victims should be given the opportunity for restitution, especially for criminal offenses. Both the offender and victim should receive the help necessary to reintegrate as productive members of the community.

The decision to participate in RJ should be voluntary and the process needs to be well-designed. Generally, an experienced facilitator will mediate these discussions. It begins by setting the stage with independent preliminary discussions to explain the process, manage expectations, and discuss possible outcomes. Ground rules should be clearly set to diminish any further harm. For example, forbidding foul language, interruptions, or allowing vicious expressions. Creating ground rules is important. Although there is a reasonable expectation for a victim to express anger, it can be harmful when victims want revenge or enter a cycle of rage with a desire to hurt the offender. (We have all heard the saying, "Hurt people, hurt people.") Dehumanization should never be accepted as an avenue to allow healing in these spaces. The offender should experience remorse but should never feel victimized and have shameful regret for participating in RJ. Justice, whether traditional, social, or restorative, should not be opposed to the virtues of compassion and forgiveness. Thus, the centrality of social and restorative justice is human dignity. Forgiveness is a conscious release of anger and desire for revenge, without excusing the action. The research supports that forgiveness leads to behaviors that build healthy relationships.

There are some benefits to RJ. The research shows that it supports psychological healing that the traditional legal system does not offer. Additionally, RJ allows participants to exchange dialogue, and learn more about one another, including the events that led up to the harm. RJ also offers an opportunity for the offender to understand the magnitude of the offense and take responsibility for their actions. The traditional legal system diminishes and/or completely excludes these opportunities.

One of the greatest examples of restorative practice to injustice happened recently when Governor Gavin Newsom signed a bill that returned the three acres of property overlooking the shore known as Bruce's Beach back to the descendants of a Black couple, Charles and Willa Bruce. Purchased in 1912 for $1225.00 by the family, the estimated value of the property is over 75 million dollars and is located in the predominantly white city of Manhattan Beach. The takeover was racially motivated and seized by eminent domain. In 2021, the State of California officials unanimously passed the bill to transfer the land back to the Bruce family, including other reparations and rent paid to the family for city usage on the property. The Governor formally apologized to the Bruce family for the injustice. Restoration talks include agreements that will not burden the family with obligations (current valuation for property taxes) that can cause bankruptcy or additional harm.

JUSTICE

From an organizational perspective, managers have a responsibility to maintain harmony and a provide psychologically safe culture at work. From a humanistic perspective, the opportunities to build trust through restorative practices are endless. Emotions are high and masked with anger when employees feel unheard, unsupported, unseen, and experience injustice. Anger breeds resentment. Resentment breeds apathy. Apathy breeds hate and hate breeds violence. Victims also lose trust, which can have a ripple effect inside the organization.

CONCLUSION
First aid responders are taught to apply pressure to excessive bleeding. The pressure stops when the bleeding stops. When the bleeding stops, the healing begins. Social and restorative justice are remedies that apply pressure to help stop the continued bleeding in a culture that is traumatized by injustice.

Supporting social justice movements cannot be satisfied by simply writing public statements denouncing hate and intolerance. There are also more expectations necessary besides corporate donations and promises of future support. Greater social accountability to be socially responsible, including future prevention, is mandatory. Practitioners can collaborate strategically with employees and the community to determine the best outcomes that align with the company's social and restorative justice goals.

As practitioners, you have an obligation and responsibility as leaders to provide a safe environment for everyone to thrive. This means examining policies that promote injustice. These examinations involve the courage to deliver warnings of possible danger when someone's well-being is threatened. Thus, moral injustices will lead to unlawful injustices.

Continuing with the dance colloquial from the previous chapters, the role of justice is similar to equity's role. While equity assures that the structure is ethically sound, justice assures that that structure is lawfully sound. Justice guarantees that the standards of conduct are sanctioned if violated. When violations take place, the efforts are not focused on protecting the company brand, the focus is to restore humanity. For example, how will you respond to a belligerent drunken employee hurling insults at party attendees? What would you do if they tipped over the employee in the wheelchair in a drunken rage? Would the situation change if the employee were an executive in the company? Would it change if the executive formally apologized to the employee and the apology was accepted? In looking lawfully at your structure, what policies are in place to keep everyone safe? Do you have a standard of conduct for micro-level aggressions and other behavior that can lead to unlawful conduct? Does your company mandate employees to do traditional arbitration without any opportunity for restorative justice? Have you examined your Non-Disclosure Agreement policies? This workbook is designed to help you examine where injustice can hide in structures through policies and culture. The implication of enforcing justice is the renewal of humanity.

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Justice Brainstorm - Examination of Inclusion

Through discovery, examine how the authorities in the administration demonstrate care.

- Why are restorative and social justice important for organizations?

- What procedures can be put in place to protect those who are at risk of retaliation or discrimination within your organization?

- How does your organization hold people accountable for actions inconsistent with your values?

- What does the data suggest about complaints filed by employees against your organization?

- What is the attrition for underrepresented employees?

- What is the promotion data for underrepresented employees?

- How can the administration (Legal, HR, Board) demonstrate care in the arbitration process?

- How can your organization mitigate the fragility and/or distress?

- How can restorative justice practices be incorporated into your mediation policies?

- Can your organization use independent contractors to conduct investigations on complaints filed by employees?

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JUSTICE DEEP DIVE DISCUSSION: DETERMINING GOALS

Through the strategic priorities, write goals to formally sanction care for justice.

(EXAMPLE) Goal 1:

In creating justice, the efforts should illustrate a reduction in complaints filed by employees.

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BELONGING IS RESIDUAL

Your organizational efforts should *justify solidarity*.
Meaning, the ultimate goal of your hard work
should reasonably show a culture of inclusivity.

Belonging Literature Review

INTRODUCTION

The concept of belonging manifesting as a component of DEI within the last few years is ironic. In fact, belonging has been a crucial part of the field of psychology since the 1930s. Alfred Adler, a medical doctor, and psychotherapist introduced belonging and marked the foundation for the school of individual psychology in research. His work addressed the ongoing holistic issues of equality, education, and individual lifestyles through social connectedness, meaning in life, and career self-efficacy.

Adler's theory posits a crucial need for society to understand every individual within their social context. Hence, from an organizational standpoint, appreciate that every individual has a unique background, experience, and perspective that they bring to the table. According to Adler, the centrality of human needs involves one basic desire and goal: to belong and to feel significant. Thus, individuals should be free to express themselves authentically in a psychologically safe environment within organizational structures.

Abraham Maslow's work followed Adler's theory in 1943 with the theory of motivation, a discussion that is now popular in business and liberal science instruction. Called Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, this pyramid prioritizes the five basic needs that determine behavior: physiological, safety, love/belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Physiological, or the need for air, food, water, clothing, shelter, etc., is the starting point of Maslow's pyramid and is followed by the need for safety. Love and belonging are third in priority to human needs, according to Maslow. In belonging, a person looks to satisfy a need for affection, connectedness, trust, and acceptance along with a desire to give and receive love safely. A deficiency in love and belonging is detrimental to any individual. Research substantiates that the lack of love and belonging devastates a person's health and well-being.

Note the common theme of how psychology played an important role in introducing the concepts of equity, inclusion, and belonging in the literature. Decades later, these concepts emerged in organizational behavior instruction and corporate settings, albeit lacking the intersectionality that uncovers the inequality and harm caused to vulnerable populations. Bringing a historical perspective that was not a part of American education makes the work for DEI practitioners more complex.

BELONGING DEFINED

We will look at belonging through a variety of lenses. First, people can belong by anthropological determination, meaning the gender, ethnicity, and generational assignment placed at birth. Indeed, these assignments are emotional, and it is important to understand that, on many occasions, are not safe or come with moderate risk. Think about a child questioning their gender assignment and the trauma associated with detachment. Further, adopted and foster children may feel detached from their biological family or belong to a non-biological family of another race. There are many layers to determining social identities for every individual. Our responsibility as leaders is to understand and accept that these assignments tend to shape the lives of people and are a part of what we all bring to the workplace.

Second, people can belong by affiliation. We go to certain schools, join clubs, or enroll in professional membership associations to belong or feel connected. We live in certain neighborhoods, work in certain fields, on certain jobs, and in certain locations. We may marry or connect intimately with certain people, or belong to churches, with a variety of beliefs. The list is endless. These examples are constructions of belonging and reflect emotional investments that we make and come with a desire to belong. These constructions are fluid and also add to our life experiences. People will change these affiliations when they are threatened or don't feel connected. Conversely, some may feel stuck, trapped, or afraid to leave these associations. Again, our place is to understand and accept that a myriad of experiences will contribute to what every individual brings to the table.

Finally, there is a very unhealthy side of belonging where society forces stereotypes to categorize and devalue the worth of a human being. The people affected can spend a lifetime trying to detach from the label or the group, while constantly morphing into someone other than their authentic selves. For example, the stereotypes and tone policing on Black women can force them to appertain a certain hairstyle or speech to be accepted in society. Consider the pressure of a Black man or Muslim constantly attempting to detach from

the stereotype that categorizes them as dangerous. What about the popular opinion describing all millennials as an entitled and narcissistic generation? These are a few of countless examples where stereotyping is used as a form of belonging that causes harm. Society should never impose a desire to belong through oppressive labels. These are unsafe spaces where we lose opportunities for authentic connectedness.

Whether a person is assigned by anthropological determination, or by affiliation, the link that determines positive, healthy belonging is the emotional connectedness involved. Experiencing a sense of belonging becomes the end goal. This notion is a key determinant of well-being. It's the sweet spot where one feels at home. In a sense of belonging, there is no constant feeling of threat. It comes with healthy social relationships, interactions, trust, respect, and success. There is a strong network that provides everyone the opportunity to be understood and accepted.

The research shows that belonging is a top driver of happiness and engagement at work. Other research posits that a sense of belonging is associated with feelings of self-worth and meaning in life. Belonging will manifest in the outcomes of performative and positive survey metrics. Organizations can build a culture of belonging by addressing the underlying issues that prevent people from being accepted.

There are many solutions to building a culture of belonging. Top priorities must include embedding a strong strategy in diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice initiatives. Another priority must include developing allyship so that employees will not feel isolated at work. Finally, organizations must have ongoing learning and development training on topics that hinder belonging in society. In addition to the training on discrimination, topics in American history, including Black history, bullying, gender identity, microaggressions, imposter syndrome, and intersectionality are all great introductions that support understanding and acceptance of belonging. Having a regular team and one-on-one meetings proves to be effective for belonging, especially where staff can safely provide critical feedback. Our workbook is designed to help examine areas where belonging affects behavior, including identifying what behaviors or actions hinder belonging inside your group, department, or organization. Strategies to decolonize these categories are crucial to belonging. The safety and survival of those affected will depend on the organizational culture.

CONCLUSION
The role of belonging will be affected greatly by the work of diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice. If any of their contributions are weak, then belonging will suffer. We can end the dance colloquial by ensuring that belonging will show up in the most unlikely places. It's the proper greeting from the valet or how the host welcomes at the door. It is the well-thought-out seating arrangements, food and drink menu, music, and festive decor. Belonging is satisfied when everyone can dance, laugh, connect, and feel a part of the celebration. Belonging is hindered, for example, if equity does not make sure that the building is safe for the capacity, accommodations, and variety of people. Hence, belonging can also be hindered if there is a lack of diversity or if justice doesn't protect the space from injustice. For example, from an organizational standpoint, how is belonging demonstrated in your written job descriptions, behavioral interview questions, and when onboarding employees? These are essentially invitations for an opportunity to showcase the value of belonging within the organization. Belonging is the essential party planner that drives the other initiatives to dig deeper and calculate risk and reward. The reward is noted years later when people are still talking about the party.

BELONGING

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Belonging Brainstorm - Examination of Belonging

Through discovery, examine areas where belonging has changed or can change behaviors. Also, identifying what behaviors or actions are inconsistent with the core values of the organization. .

- How do you define the overall culture?

- Identify areas where belonging is addressed in strategic goals and objectives.

- Give examples of how internal and external activities influence belonging?

- What is the pain scale of demonstrating belonging in your executive leadership? For example, will your executive leaders support a PSA on current trending topics that are inconsistent with a culture of belonging?

- How can your organization mitigate any fragility and/or distress where belonging is not present?

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CONCLUSION

Your research findings should reveal key insights into the problems and opportunities of building a BJEDI culture. Use this section to highlight implications and suggest actionable recommendations. Use this to leverage and inform your next steps to drive meaningful progress.

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Reflect on your journey as a team to examine the key findings and implications of the discovery. Draw conclusions and make recommendations on next steps.

KEY FINDINGS	CONCLUSIONS
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

Notes:

Brainstorm - Challenges & Barriers

If your state or organization has banned DEI, here are some questions to brainstorm to help navigate the challenges and barriers.

- What specific BJEDI initiatives have been banned by the state, and what are the underlying reasons for these restrictions?

- How do these legal limitations impact our organization's ability to foster BJEDI within the workplace?

- Are there alternative approaches or creative solutions that we can explore to achieve our BJEDI goals while complying with state regulations?

- What strategies can we employ to engage with lawmakers, policymakers, and advocacy groups to advocate for changes in legislation that support BJEDI efforts?

- Can we leverage partnerships with other organizations or coalitions to collectively address legal barriers and advocate for more inclusive policies at the state level?

- How might we adapt existing BJEDI initiatives to align with state regulations without compromising our commitment to diversity and equity?

- What opportunities do we have to focus on internal culture and education to cultivate a more inclusive environment within the constraints of state law?

- What steps can we take to communicate transparently with employees about the legal limitations impacting our BJEDI efforts and involve them in finding innovative solutions?

- How can we continue to support marginalized communities and advance social justice causes outside of traditional BJEDI initiatives that may be restricted by state laws?

- How can we turn these legal challenges into opportunities for creativity, resilience, and collaboration to foster a more inclusive and equitable workplace despite external constraints?

NOTES

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