

Interrupting Prejudice and Oppression

Interrupting prejudiced and stereotyping comments and behavior can be scary because we risk turning the attack or anger towards ourselves. While people may tell jokes, make comments or behave in prejudiced ways out of ignorance, they usually know at least on some level that they are putting down someone else.

It's often easier to do nothing, however this is in essence approval of the behavior. There is no neutral stance. There are no innocent bystanders.

When prejudiced comments are made, try the following:

- Take action! Be prepared with a statement that you can use.
- Listen non-judgmentally. Treat people with respect and avoid humiliating anyone.
- Ask questions to find out how they came to their thinking. That will assist them to reflect and rethink what they've said.
- Share how you are impacted by their comment or behavior.
- Try to be thoughtful about everyone in the situation. Remember, interrupting prejudice creates a safer environment for everyone.

Things to say to Interrupt Prejudiced Comments:

- "Could you explain to me what you mean when you say..."
- "Did you know that members of that group find that hurtful?"
- "What you just said could be perceived as prejudiced."
- "Where did you get that information?"
- "I don't think you meant to offend me, but you did, and let me tell you why..."
- "I don't think you meant that, but how I felt was..."
- "I'm going to interrupt what you're saying because you've just offended me."

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