

Systemic discrimination part 2

What we can do

Module 5 handouts

Strategies to initiate and engage in challenging conversations

The following strategies may be helpful when interacting with groups who are resistant to acknowledging the issues related to systemic discrimination.

What helps

1. **Recruit allies:**

Initiating and engaging in challenging conversations can be emotionally demanding. Expanding the group of people willing to support you in these conversations is an important first step.

2. **Identify shared goals and values:**

Begin by identifying shared values and visions for your community. Highlight how any proposed changes will help meet these shared goals.

3. **Highlight shared negative impacts of the issue:**

Seeing how the issues impact the community may help people to understand why it is important to acknowledge and address them.

4. **Build empathy through storytelling:**

Specific, real examples of lived experience may help people to understand the depth of the impact of the issue.

5. **Have supporting data ready to share:**

Data-based evidence, such as the percentage of members of a specific identify group or groups that are impacted, will support advocacy for change.

6. **Be curious about alternative perspectives:**

Demonstrating an openness to understanding the reasons behind the issue may help increase the openness of others involved to consider your concerns. Your own openness may result in you shifting your own understanding.

7. **Clarify desired outcomes:**

If you bring forward recommendations to address an issue, clarity on what changes you would like to see and why they are important to you and to your shared goals and values will help motivate others to consider making changes.



8. Offer to be part of the solution:

Offering to contribute to the implementation of the requested changes may encourage others to consider these changes.

9. Be responsive to reactions:

If you notice signs of disengagement or resistance, acknowledge what you notice and ask participants what they need for this conversation to work. Consider stepping back, revising your approach or postponing the conversation.

What doesn't help

1. Blaming individuals rather than the system

Making a person or group feel personally responsible for an issue often results in them shutting down and disengaging. Focus on the issue and not the people.

2. Information overload

A long monologue with no opportunity for participants to contribute their ideas may lead to disengagement. Keep your comments brief and encourage participant engagement.

3. Speaking on behalf of someone without permission

To demonstrate the impact of an issue, you may wish to share stories from other people in your community who have been impacted. It is important to have their permission before speaking on their behalf.

4. Setting unmanageable expectations

Making changes, especially in behaviours and attitudes, takes time. Change involves humility and self-reflection. Expect that changes in awareness and actions may not occur immediately. Consider requesting a second meeting if, after several weeks, you have seen no progress.



Session takeaways

Identifying issues

Is it systemic
discrimination?

Why is it important
to take action?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Scale, level and entry point

Individual, localized
or broad scale?

Personal,
awareness,
advocacy, policy
change or legal?

When can action be
taken? (infographic)

Click or tap here to enter text.

Barriers and solutions

Skills, capacity, level
of influence and
risks

Click or tap here to enter text.

Resources

Examples of actions

Strategies for
challenging
conversations

Click or tap here to enter text.



BCOHRC learning resources

Systemic discrimination toolkit

BCOHRC has developed a toolkit of educational resources on systemic discrimination. The toolkit elements require varying degrees of learner engagement and time and help achieve different learning outcomes.

- [Video](#) - This introductory video is available on our systemic discrimination webpage. It supports people with limited time to invest in developing a basic understanding of systemic discrimination. The video comes with a conversation guide to support ongoing learning in communities.
- [Introduction to systemic discrimination workshop](#) - This workshop is offered through virtual public sessions and is available for specific groups both virtually and in-person. Virtual versions of this interactive workshop are offered three times a year. The workshop introduces systemic discrimination and helps learners to become familiar with its impacts and develop skills to notice it in their daily lives. Participants are also introduced to different types of actions they may wish to take.
- [Systemic discrimination: What we can do workshop](#) - By considering real-life stories and examples of successful actions, participants will reflect on how systemic discrimination shows up in their communities and organizations and consider strategies to address it. This workshop is offered through virtual public sessions and is available for specific groups both virtually and in-person. Virtual, public sessions are offered three times a year.
- [Experiential session](#) - In this in-person session, participants will be guided through a simulation that helps them to experience, to some degree, what systemic discrimination feels like. Through guided reflection and conversations, participants will begin to identify examples of systemic discrimination in their own lives and how they might consider taking action. BCOHRC will train volunteers to facilitate these sessions in their communities.
- [Webpage](#) - The systemic discrimination webpage on BCOHRC's website will include a variety of resources to support learning and conversations about this topic, including an infographic. The webpage currently features the video and conversation guides.

Human rights system videos and learner packs

These videos introduce basic information about human rights. You'll learn what human rights are, how human rights are protected and how the human rights system works in B.C. Each video is short and helps make complex information and ideas easy to understand. All videos come with a learner pack and educator's guide to support groups in taking their learning further.



[I love my human rights videos and conversation guides](#)

Our “I love my human rights” project uses video storytelling as a tool to help personalize complex human rights concepts and encourage empathy and action. Each video comes with conversation guides for adults and for use in schools.

Human Rights Code educational webinars

These sessions are available to the public several times throughout the year. Three educational sessions are available; all sessions focus on employment, services and housing. Follow us on social media via @humanrights4bc to learn about the latest webinars.



How systemic discrimination works



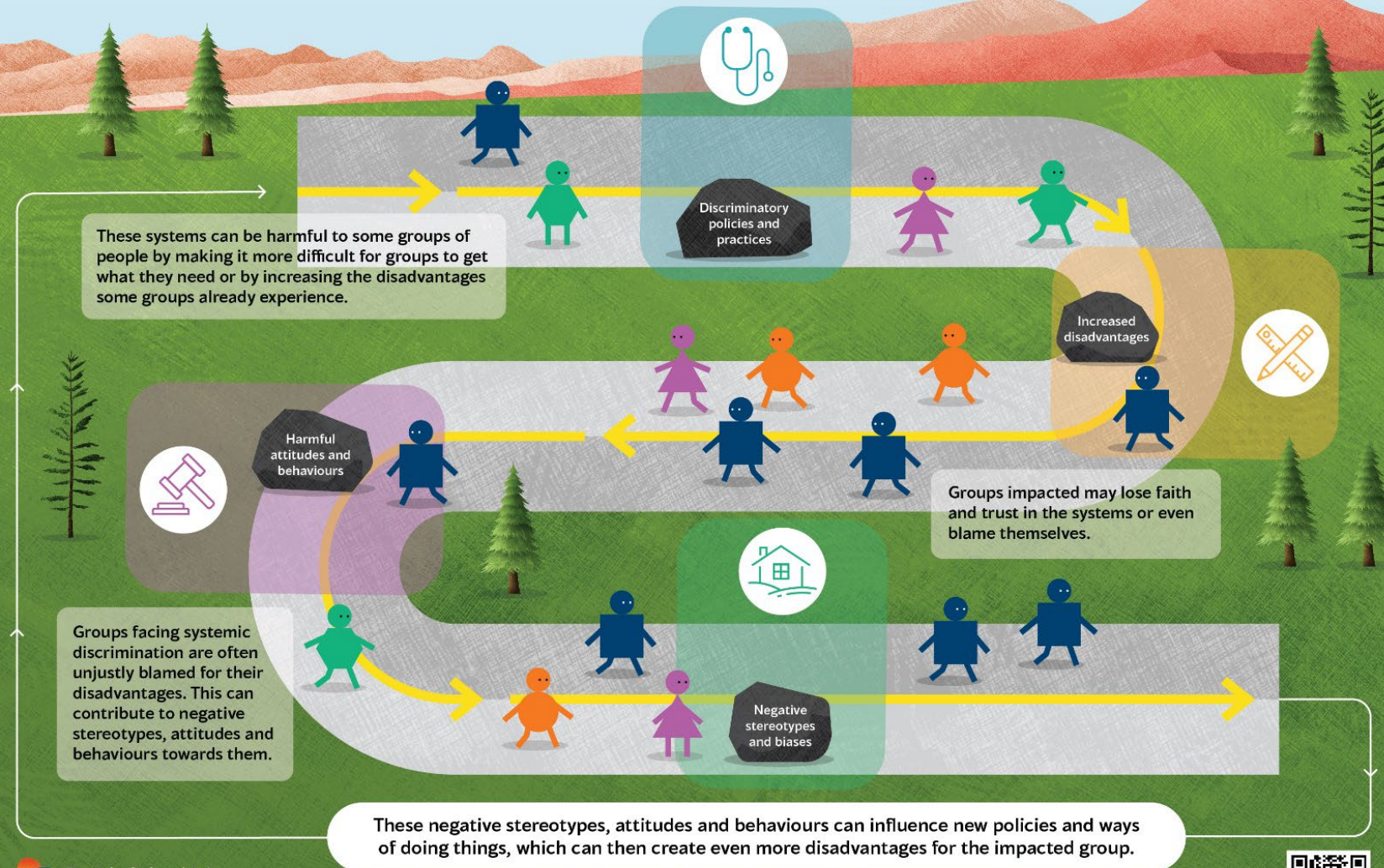
Over time, societies have built systems such as health care, education, justice, and housing.



The groups that develop these systems often intentionally or unintentionally design them to benefit themselves.



Other groups of people may experience negative impacts based on the way these systems are designed, built and maintained.



British Columbia's
Office of the Human Rights
Commissioner

To learn more:

