

Staff Anti-Racism Awareness & Education (SARAE)

5th Week Winter Term Dialogue: Tuesday, February 2nd, 2021

Winter Term Theme: Understanding internal biases and perceptions and how they influence interactions with difference.

Media for this discussion:

TEDX Talk: [*How to Overcome Your Biases? Walk Boldly Toward Them by Vernā Myers*](#)

Discussion Questions:

Vernā Myers calls us to do three things in this TEDX Talk: 1) Stop denying our biases, 2) Walk towards our discomfort, and 3) If we see something, say something.

The following discussion questions will encourage you to think about how these calls to action are, or could be present in your life and work:

1. How many relationships do you have with people unlike yourself? What may have been contributing factors to the formation, or non-formation, of such relationships?
2. Myers' 2nd suggestion is for us to walk towards our discomfort. What are some moments in your life when your bias has been challenged, or you have had to force yourself to be uncomfortable before you could feel comfortable? How can we make this practice a habit in our work at Carleton?
3. Vernā Myers says, "Biases are stories we make up about people before we know who they are," and "You're not going to get comfortable before you get uncomfortable." Why do we have such a fear of being uncomfortable in unfamiliar situations and with people unlike us? What can we do to overcome this fear?
4. Myers' 3rd call to action encourages us to speak up if we witness injustice. What holds us back from speaking up when we notice or witness acts of bias/microaggressions? What beliefs and emotions do we have to navigate/overcome to speak out, and how can we build that skill?
5. Were you able to take the implicit bias test, and if so, was there anything that surprised you?

Note: These questions are just building blocks to spur conversation. Other ideas, thoughts, and questions beyond the few listed here are more than welcome.