

ADDRESSING BIGOTRY IN THE CLASSROOM & THE COMMUNITY

This document is intended to help you, as students, deal with situations of bigotry in the classroom and community. Bigotry may occur in the form of prejudice, intolerance, and the use of derogatory words/comments. These situations can catch us off guard, and this document offers tips that can help prepare you if an incident were to occur to you or to someone else.

1. Accept your emotional response.
 - a. It's normal to question yourself and wonder if you heard what they said.
 - b. Anger can be immediate or delayed.
 - c. The goal is to make a well-considered decision on how to respond that you are proud of later.
2. Weigh the costs and benefits of speaking up.
 - a. Prioritize your physical and mental well-being.
 - b. Potential benefit: If you speak up, you may be able to change their behavior for the better.
 - c. Potential cost: They may be defensive or dismissive, and if they have power over you, they may retaliate. (See 5, 6, & 7 for information on reporting bigotry and retaliation below.)
3. Tips for speaking up "in" the moment.
 - a. Blunt accusations are more likely to cause defensiveness.
 - b. Sharing your emotions and reaction to a comment can help the speaker to understand and change.
 - c. Asking a question can encourage the speaker to reflect on what they said and open up a discussion.
 - d. If you are not concerned about the other person changing, you can simply call it out and name the bigotry.
4. Tips for not speaking up "in" the moment.
 - a. You can abruptly change the subject to signal that what they just said is not ok.
 - b. You can make eye contact and stay silent to see if they realize their mistake.
 - c. You can consent to an ally stepping in and addressing the issue on your behalf.
 - d. Remember bigotry in the United States is bigger than one conversation or moment.
5. Find your allies; report the event.
 - a. If you see a situation of bigotry occur to someone else, and you would like to step in, remember it is the person's choice if they want you to speak up on their behalf or not.

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