

## Are You Aware of Your Biases?

*If we are aware of our values and what shapes our perceptions of the world, we can be sensitive to when these messages may get in our way of embracing diversity.*

*A bias is simply a preference or choice, an instinctive orientation to an activity, taste, etc., sometimes rooted in heritage. Without awareness, we don't have a chance of dealing with our biases. And, it is often the unconscious biases that "trip us up" and make us less effective in embracing diversity.*

*In order to be a leader in diversity acceptance, one must be aware of his/her own biases as well as his/her "red flags". Red flags are words, gestures, opinions, characteristics, etc., that "strike a chord" of importance and "trigger strong, negative emotional responses for you.*

*It's time for you to personally reflect about the negative messages associated with certain groups or types of people you were taught while growing up. Use the following questions to guide you. This worksheet will not be collected; it's for your eyes only.*

1. Where did you live while you were growing up and what experiences did you have? How did these influence who you are now?

2. As a child, what messages did you receive about your identity? What adults had major influences in your life?

3. As a child, what messages did you receive about other groups or types of people? Use the following "fill in the blank" questions to help you reflect.

- \_\_\_\_\_ are stupid.
- \_\_\_\_\_ are lazy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ are dirty.
- \_\_\_\_\_ are bad.
- \_\_\_\_\_ can't be trusted.



