



Being an Active Ally

Active Allyship: Leading with collective work in mind

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Liberatory Consciousness

FRAMEWORK TO DEVELOP A
LIBERATORY CONSCIOUSNESS
BY DR. BARBARA J. LOVE



Our ability to Ally also depends
on our **Mental Models**

Active Opposition

- Active opposers are typically deeply rooted in their choice to be a strong opponent of DEI.
- These are the people whose minds cannot be changed and are committed to disrupting the work of DEI.
- The potential for engagement is slim, and often leads to the determination that the energy of trying is in vain.





Passive Unawareness

- These are the people who are unaware and cannot engage in the work of DEI, simply because they are uninformed.
- Passively unaware individuals can be identified by their lack of engagement in the conversation and their inability to recognize the severity of the problems in equity and equality.

Passive Awareness

- Passively aware individuals can appreciate that attention is being given to the work of DEI but see it as someone else's responsibility...the bystander effect.
- They see this as the work of someone else instead of taking ownership to help solve for inequity.
- Oftentimes, this disengagement comes from feeling that DEI is only relevant to communities marginalized by systems.





Active Awareness

- Actively aware mental modelers know this work is necessary and are actively working to advance it.
- These are DEI practitioners, human rights activists, social justice workers, but they are also regular people who work to advocate for others daily.

Overactive Awareness

- At times, active awareness can go a little too far and even hinder the efforts to advance one's engagement in DEI work.
- Those who have hyperawareness are often early adopters of the work or they have been victimized in such a way that they are headstrong about the work and wish to see results by any means necessary.
- An example of overactive awareness can be types of *cancel culture*.
 - If a person/ organization shares something offensive, exclusionary or politically incorrect, this mental model will cancel them. Instead of extending grace and allowing for correction, growth and progress, they automatically ostracize. By going to such extremes, we push people further away from this space.



WHAT IS TRUTH?

Western Worldview

- There is only one truth, based on science or Western-style law.

Indigenous Worldview

- There can be many truths; truths are dependent upon individual experiences.

- Edgar Villaneuva - *Money as Medicine, Decolonizing Wealth*



Explore examples of how and where you have seen the 5 Mental Models

Active Opposition: Active opposers and deeply rooted in being an opponent of DEI

Passive Unawareness: Not engaged because they are simply uninformed

Passive Awareness: Appreciate DEI, but don't think it is their responsibility.
Bystander.

Active Awareness: Know it is necessary and are actively advancing DEI

Overactive Awareness: "Super-woke."
Sometimes, awareness with no boundaries

Ally: Combining or uniting a resource/privilege with another for mutual benefit

To ally is a verb

**“Allyship is what you DO with what
you care about.”**

-The World According to Dr. Dwinita

An **active-ally** is someone who witnesses injustice and responds to it in any situation, with actionable awareness.



Awareness

This is your **initial awakening** to the injustices around you. You are not only able to see that they exist, but you begin to understand you play a crucial role in stopping the cycle.



Education

This is where you become an **intentional student** in the work. From webinars, lectures and workshops, to blog posts, books and documentaries, you study the complexities of things like racism and the many ways it manifests in our society.



Self Interrogation

This is the stage where the **real self-work** begins. It is where the most discomfort sits. It is where you replace tools of personal bias and racism with tools of personal accountability. The growth mindset happens here.



Community Action

This step only works after you have spent enough time in Step 3 (Self Interrogation). Without Step 3 work, you can be harmful to others by demonstrating **performative allyship** or **saviorism**.

Here, you leverage your position of leadership/influence/privilege – no matter how big or small - to encourage others to do their own self work or advance an issue.

Active-allyship requires an understanding that we might be wrong. It asks us to challenge many of things we “know” and have been taught to be true.

Active-allyship asks us to be aware of the microaggressions and experiences we’ve never had to consider. It requires opening head and heart space for new ways of listening, learning, and being.



Explore a time...

That you learned you might be wrong. You had to challenge many of the things you “knew” and had been taught to be true.

What are some things you’ve never had to consider?

Real Solidarity versus “Ally Theater”

- Real solidarity doesn't require an audience to witness what a good “ally” you are
- Ally theater features lots of poorly-disguised cries of “not all _____” are bad and “I’m not like other _____”
- Real solidarity isn't worn like a nametag





Reflection

How have have you witnessed/experienced
Ally Theater?

and

How can you turn your privilege into change?

The Five Tenets of Active Allyship

1. What is **honest** about what I'm feeling? About my actions or words?
2. Am I allowing **grace** for myself? For where I am? Where I've been? For my process?
3. Am I risking **vulnerability**? Risk it with myself. With others.
4. Am I allowing myself to be **witnessed**?
5. Am I remembering my **commitment** to the work? To changing, to challenging, to continuing?

Upstander/Ally Strategy: *Do you have one?*

Interrupt	Question	Educate	Echo
"Excuse me, can I just clarify what I think I heard?"	"Have you considered the implications of your actions/words?"	"Let me share my personal experiences"	When someone else speaks up, echo and reinforce. This encourages others to speak up and amplifies the upstander. It also lets others know you are not complicit.
"Hold on, can we go back to what you called the virus."	"What made you say that?"	"Here's what I know about the historical impact"	"Thank you for saying something"

Ways to show up as an Active Ally

1. **The Sponsor** – talk about expertise of others when they are not in the room
2. **The Champion** - Advocate for more women, people of color, and members of other underrepresented groups
3. **The Amplifier**- When someone proposes a good idea, repeat it and give them credit.
4. **The Advocate** - Ask someone from an underrepresented group to be a co-author or collaborator on something.
5. **The Scholar** - Investigate and continuously read publications, podcasts, or social media by and about underrepresented groups.
6. **The Upstander** - Always speak up if you witness behavior or speech that is degrading or offensive.
7. **The Confidant** - Believe others' experiences. Don't assume something couldn't happen just because you haven't personally experienced it.
8. **The Contributor** – Offers their time, talent or treasures to support a cause.

Fakequity

A performative act.

Saying without doing.

Allyship with no action.

Get
Anchored!





Thank you!

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