

SHIFTING ATTITUDES

Many of us try to change bigoted attitudes by using facts and figures, but new information rarely changes peoples' minds. Hearing personal stories of discrimination can, however, transform the most hardened hearts. We can refute facts and figures, but we can't refute someone's story.

**“We don't change people's minds.
We change their hearts with
personal stories of discrimination.”**

Listening to people, hearing their stories, and understanding their issues allows us to develop coalitions and reframe issues to allow us to work on common ground.

“One-on-one relationship-building is at the heart of effective inter-group coalitions.”

Building relationships allows us to become allies. Allies may disagree on various surface issues, but have common ground on deeper issues.

“Reach for the higher ground.”

All quotes are NCBI principles taken from [Healing Into Action: A Leadership Guide for Creating Diverse Communities](#) by Cherie R. Brown and George J. Mazza.



Building Environments To Welcome Diversity

“Anger and intolerance are the twin enemies of correct understanding.”

“Freedom is not worth having if it does not include the freedom to make mistakes.”

- Mahatma Ghandi

Northern Essex Community College

NCBI

The National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) was founded in 1984 in Washington, D.C., as a non-profit leadership training organization. NCBI works to eliminate prejudice and conflict in communities throughout the world. NCBI has 65 college/university-based teams known as Campus Affiliates. The U.S. Department of Education recognized NCBI's campus work as a "promising practice", a designation of excellence given to only a handful of programs in the United States.

NCBI believes that an effective diversity training program must teach effective listening skills, conflict resolution skills, the ability to manage dialogue across group lines and a rationale for creating a welcoming workplace that becomes everyone's responsibility.

NCBI & NECC

In January 2004 NECC became a Campus Affiliate of NCBI. Members of the campus community were trained as facilitators to present NCBI's welcoming diversity workshop and conflict resolution workshop.

Since Fall 2004, NCBI team members have presented workshops in classrooms and for staff. Workshops can be tailored to your particular needs and can run from one to six hours.

"Welcoming diversity means that every person counts and every issue counts."

WHAT WE DO

The workshops allow participants to gain self awareness, stretch beyond their comfort zone, and develop new understanding of different groups. The workshops are interactive, experiential, and high energy. Participants are both teachers and learners.

In our workshops we

- Celebrate differences and similarities
- Identify misinformation about other groups
- Identify and heal from internalized oppression
- Claim pride in our own identity
- Gain empowerment by learning ways to challenge bigoted comments and actions
- Learn to become allies to groups to which we do not belong

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Attend a workshop. Workshops are offered on campus at no cost to participants
- Request a workshop for your staff or your class

Team members are also available to organize panel discussions around particular issues.

Workshops are available by request.

Please visit our website at:

<http://distance.necc.mass.edu/ofsd>

(Click on the NCBI link.)

BECOME A TEAM MEMBER

NCBI leaders are staff, faculty, administrators and students from the college community. We work together in multicultural teams and empower others to eliminate the harmful effects of institutionalized discrimination, enabling groups from diverse backgrounds to work together toward shared goals.

In order for NCBI to meet its goals, active and dedicated team members are needed. Team members may participate by attending our planning meetings and/or facilitating workshops. Team members initially attend a three-day training workshop paid for by the Office of Faculty and Staff Development and attend monthly NCBI meetings.

"Building allies with people who belong to groups that have traditionally mistreated our people is a powerful way to break the cycle of mistrust."

The work of our NCBI team is expanding and we always welcome new members. For a complete list of the NECC team, visit our website.

Contact Judith Kamber, Dean of Professional Development, at (978) 556-3955 or at jkamber@necc.mass.edu for more information on becoming a team member.

"People can take on tough issues more readily when the issues are presented in a spirit of hope."