

# Little Things Mean A Lot™

From Micro-inequities  
to Micro-affirmations

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*This program was developed by Brigid Moynahan, President and CEO of The Next Level, Inc.*

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THE #1 *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLER

# DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF...

and It's All Small Stuff



SIMPLE WAYS TO KEEP THE  
LITTLE THINGS FROM TAKING  
OVER YOUR LIFE

READ BY THE AUTHOR

**RICHARD CARLSON. PH. D.**



# Introductions

Introduce yourself to your tablemates and briefly discuss:

- Give your name
- One thing about yourself we would not know by looking at you

# Why Little Things Do Mean A Lot

This program addresses the daily messages we send one another at work that cause us to feel

- included or excluded
- engaged or discouraged
- valued or overlooked

## It's A Wake Up Call

- Because these messages are so often subtle, they've been largely overlooked by corporate organizations. Yet their impact is enormous.

## It's An Opportunity

- The insights you get will improve your relationships at work, home, and in your community. It will also show you how to make significant breakthroughs in your organization - by learning to engage and value people.



# Workshop Objectives

- Recognize that the way we treat each other at work—the little things we do—has a **big impact**.
- Define micro-messages, microinequities, and micro-affirmations.
- Learn to respond effectively to negative messages (microinequities) that can undermine our success.
- Equip you with simple tools and strategies you can use to encourage others and make the workplace more inclusive.

# How We'll Treat One Another Here

## Confidentiality:

- “What goes on in here, stays in here”
- During the program
  - feel free to share your own experiences with one another
  - if you draw upon other people's examples, don't use names

# Defining the “Small Stuff”

**Micro-messages:** Signals we send to one another through our behavior. They are called “micro” because the behaviors are small, although their impact can be enormous.

**Micro-inequities:** Micro-messages we send other people that cause them to feel devalued, slighted, discouraged or excluded.

**Micro-affirmations:** Micro-messages that cause people to feel valued, included, or encouraged.

# Discussion in pairs

1. **Share an example of a micro-inequity you've experienced that bothered you.**
2. **What did you do in response to the micro-inequity (i.e., Did you speak about it directly to the person, stay silent, complain to others....) ?**



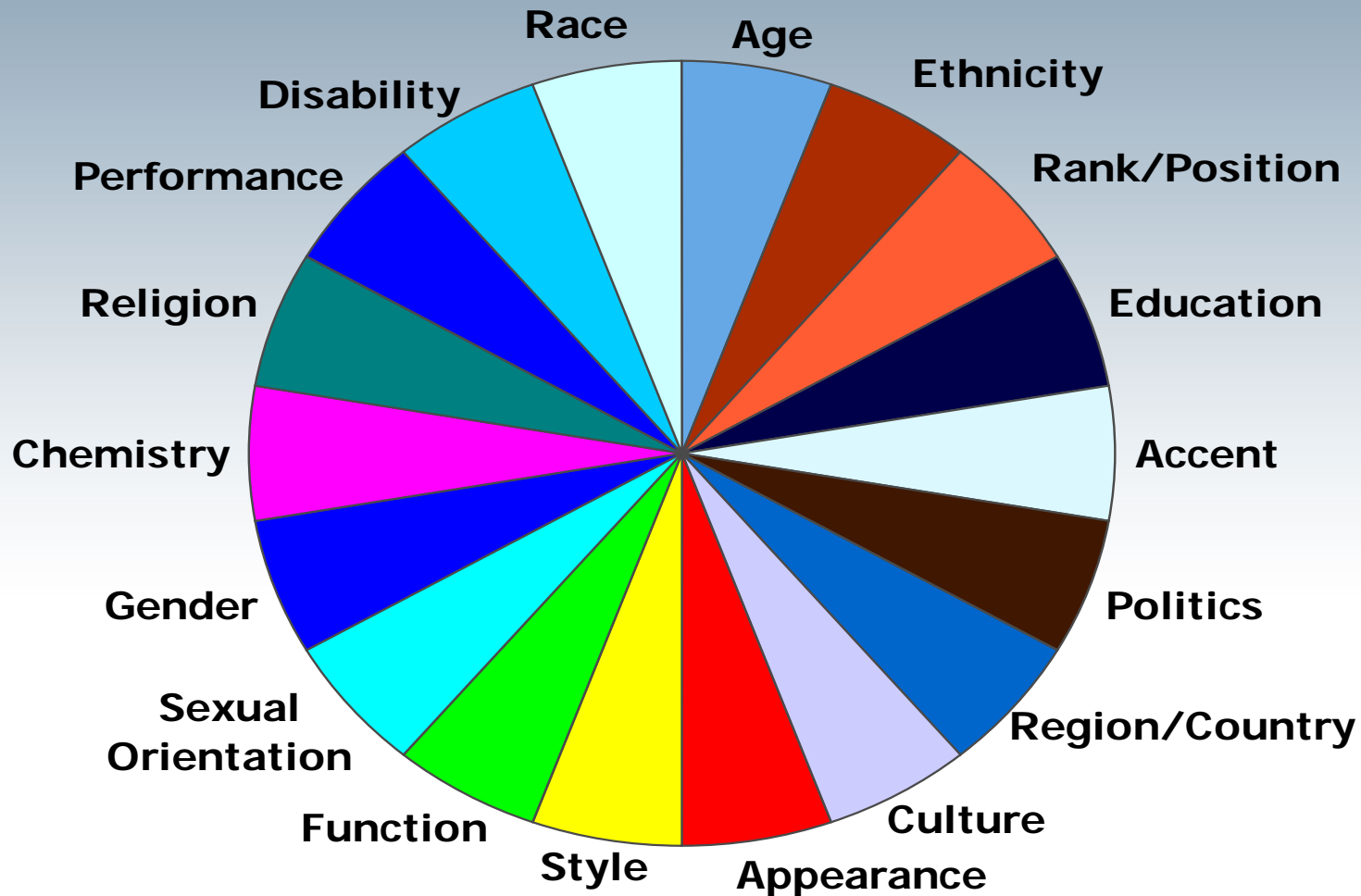
# What Are Microinequities?

- Subtle messages that build up and have a big impact. Micro-inequities break connection.
  - Tiny, pervasive, cumulative, discouraging
  - Often semi-conscious
  - Lurking just below the surface
  - Built into an organization's culture
  - Lead to damaged self-esteem, withdrawal
  - Discourage creativity and risk-taking

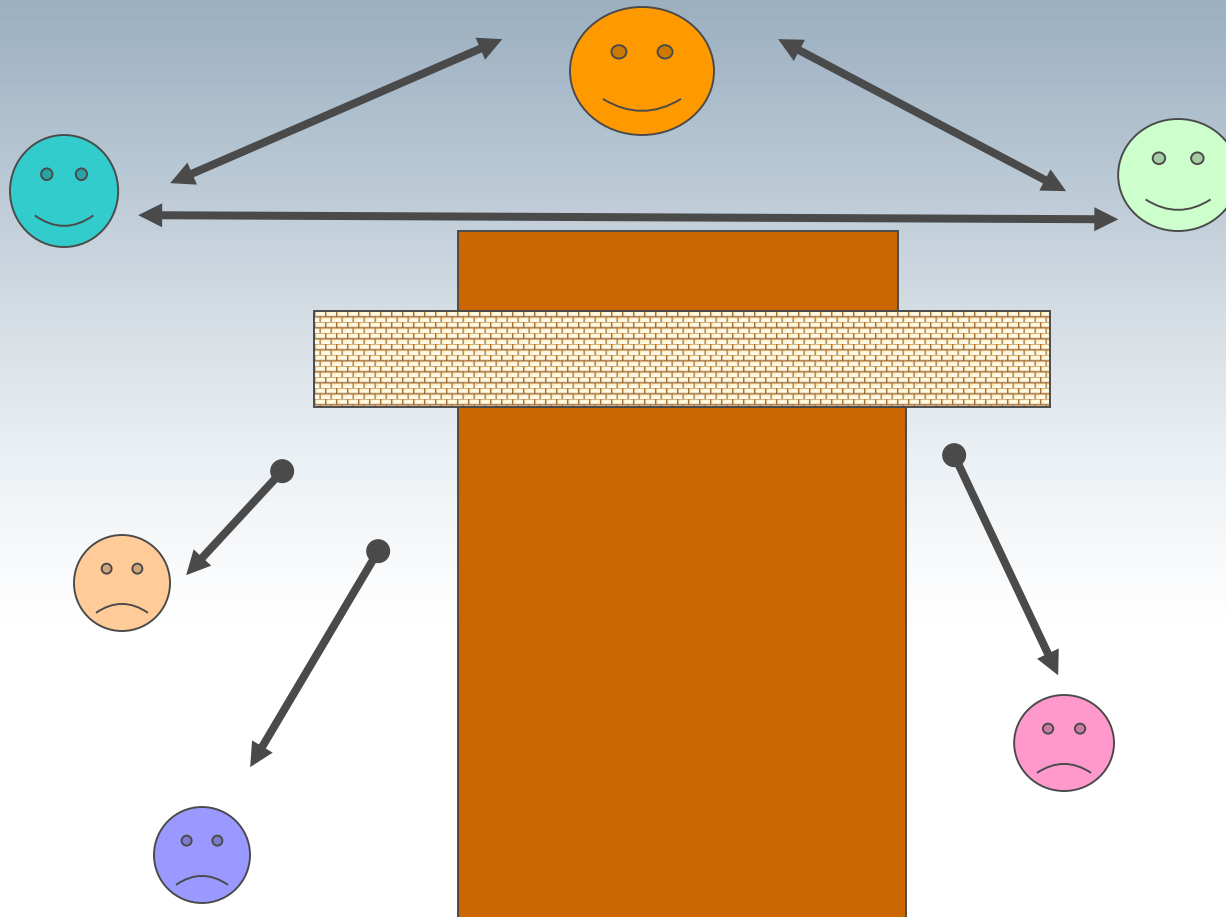
# Microinequities: A Diversity Challenge

- **We tend to value the similar and reject the different.**
  - This is a pervasive human tendency
  - Recent research finds that it's "hard wired"
  - It's even reflected in the English language: "like" means appreciate but also means "similar"
- **As we create policies, procedures, and initiatives to encourage diversity and inclusion, people continue to use daily micro-inequities to wall out differences.**

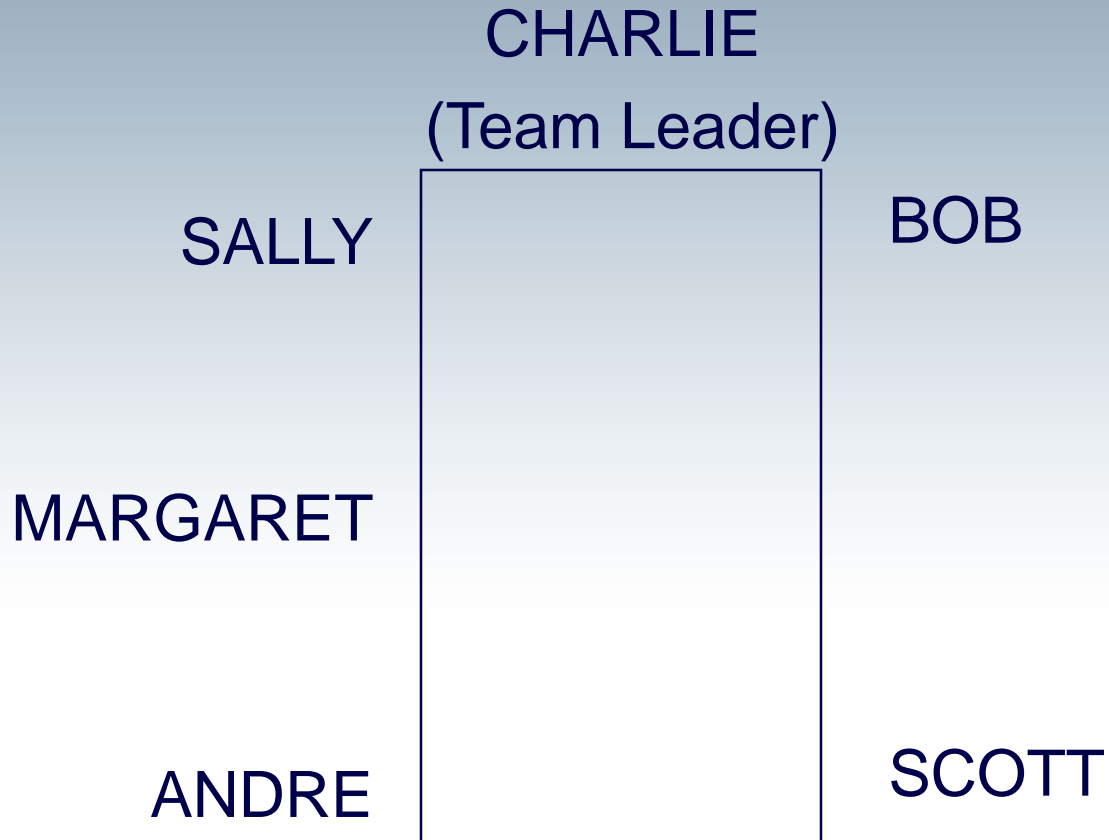
# People Use Microinequities to Exclude All Kinds of Differences



# Microinequities: Bricks in the Wall



# Team Meeting Characters



# A Team Meeting

- Observe micro-inequities
- Notice impact on performance
- Prepare to coach the characters

# Promoting An Inclusive Climate

- Charlie's lessons toward changing the culture:
  - Accountability
  - Transparency
  - Inclusive
  - Supportive

# Promoting An Inclusive Climate

- Notice your reactions...
  - When am I listening
  - When am I shutting people out?
  - Who am I including and excluding?
  - Who am I encouraging and praising?
  - Whose contributions am I taking for granted?
  - Who do I consistently overlook?



# Promoting An Inclusive Climate

- Ask your colleagues, customers and clients...
  - Do you feel...included...respected...valued?
  - What behaviors wall people out?
  - What behaviors encourage contribution?
  - What can I do differently?
  - What can the team do differently?

# Taking It Home: Personal Commitments

## ACTION PLAN

- Identify
  - One thing you will start
  - One thing you will stop

## “Weaving a Web of Inclusion” CARD

**Thank you for your time  
and participation!**