

**Title: Using Inclusive Language in Your Marketing Efforts**  
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**APA/Peggy Mihelich:** Hello and welcome to our latest installment of supercharge your presence. This is Peggy Mihelich, senior director of member content at APA. Today's webinar focuses on using inclusive language in your marketing efforts. Some important points before we get started. This program does not offer CE. However, we will email everyone watching live today a certificate of attendance.

Attendees must watch for a minimum of 45 minutes to receive the certificate. This presentation is being recorded and everyone who registers will be emailed the recording in about two weeks. We will chat out a link to the slide presentation and a resource document during the webinar. If you miss those, don't worry. We will include links with the recording.

During our time together, you will be on mute. If you have a question for our presenter, type them in using the questions box located on your webinar screen. We will have time to answer some of your questions after the formal presentation has concluded. Now for our speaker, Dr. Vanessa Hintz is a licensed clinical psychologist workshop leader and keynote speaker. She currently serves as the senior director of equity, diversity, and inclusion engagement and outreach for APA.

She has engaged with practitioners and scholars in the fields of academia, consultation, training, utilizing expertise in psychology and human behavior to provide insights focused on principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion. She is excited to share her inclusive language strategies with you today. Welcome, Dr. Hintz.

**Dr. Vanessa Hintz:** Thank you so much. Good day everyone. I am very excited to be here with you all today to talk about inclusive language and how we can use it in marketing, not only ourselves as psychologists but also the work that we do. I'm going to get right to it because there's a lot and we have a little bit of time together today. I just want to start by thanking you all for sharing in this space with me today virtually and I hope you and your families are well.

I also want to start with some acknowledgments acknowledging that I am currently located in Waukesha, Wisconsin which is a Western suburb of Milwaukee. This is the occupied territory of a number of first nations tribes. Pottawatomí, the Kickapoo, the Myaamia, and the Ojibwe Šakówinj, and the Peoria peoples. Also, APA central office in DC is located in the occupied territory of the Nacotchtank and Piscataway first nations.

I want to pay respects to the first peoples of this land. I want us all also to take a moment to honor these elders past and present and to consider the many legacies of inequity that have brought us here today to have this conversation about inclusive language. I also want to acknowledge the impossibility of separating the history of psychology from histories of colonialism and enslavement in the United States.

I want to acknowledge that these past harms breach into the present and absolutely affect what we are doing today. Again, just to elevate that and acknowledge that

that's going to be something that we talk about throughout the presentation as well. Just to give a bit of structure, I'm very non-directive generally speaking. I'm going to be directive in this hour because we only have an hour and there's so much to do. I want to be sure that we have plenty of time to address any questions that you all may have.

We're going to talk about basically this two lanes related to the utilization of inclusive language. First, we're going to talk about logistically speaking about inclusive language. What is that and what do we need and how might we, to the point that was made earlier, what are some strategies that we can use to ensure we are utilizing inclusive language?

We're also going to talk about these other languages, the process because utilizing inclusive language is one piece of what it is that we do. The other is developing our own identities related to equity, diversity, and inclusion, our own principles, our own values. We are all on a different space in a different place in that journey. I think that there's nothing wrong with that. There's no right or wrong way to be.

We're just going to talk a little bit about how we can supplement these strategies with this attitudinal work that we want to do as well. Just one more piece of context setting before we get started. In talking about inclusive language and its utilization but just inclusion more generally, we tend to talk about that in relation to aspects of identity, aspects of valuing others who may be the same or different from ourselves.

In so doing, that can be very emotionally charged and I want to acknowledge and honor that and not at all dissuade that I actually would invite everybody to lean into any feelings or experiences that you have during our conversation today. This is taken from the work of Glenn Singleton's *Courageous conversations about race*. We are going to talk about race. We talk about more than race. We talk about identity specifically.

I appreciate these understandings. I will just ask that you all in this space today or watching on-demand keep these things in mind as we go through our conversation today. The first is to stay engaged.

In this virtual world, engagement looks different to a lot of people. Some people got kids and pets and spouses and plants that they have to take care of all while trying to maintain their focus and attention on this.

I invite you to engage in a way that is most comfortable for you. There again is no right or wrong way to do so. I invite you to experience discomfort. If anything that I say today makes you uncomfortable, welcome. I invite that. What I don't invite though and what I hope does not happen is for anybody to feel psychologically harmed. Discomfort is a precursor for change. Psychological harm is not helpful in any way, shape, or form.

You will have access to my email address hopefully at some point during this presentation. I invite you if there's anything that you all would like to talk about following this presentation. I absolutely have an open door policy, but particularly if

you feel as if anything that I said was harmful to you in any way. I absolutely wanted to be sure that we can have a conversation about that.

Speak your truth. You are one of one. There's no one else on this earth that is like you, that has had your experiences, that lives your life. Your truth is your own. I don't see it as my job to tell someone that their truth is inaccurate or to tell someone how they should be. That's not what I feel like my job is now or in any time.

I see my job as being able to provide a perspective. I'm not here today to tell you how you need to use language. I'm here to provide a perspective. I think it's up to you to walk and live in your truth in a way that is most aligned with your values. Then lastly, expect and accept non-closure.

If anybody is in this space today and thinks that they're going to leave with all of the everything there is to know about inclusive language, I just want to apologize to you in advance because that is not going to happen. Typically in spaces where we're talking about inclusion or anything related to EDI, people leave those spaces with more questions than answers. We're not going to close the loop. We're never going to do that in this space.

I think if we accept that going into the conversations, we can mitigate some of the frustration that we might feel. I invite everyone to also accept and expect non-closure. Now I absolutely want to hear from you all. You can engage with this poll in one of two ways. If you're fancy, you can take a picture of that QR code with your phone.

If you are on a computer and you'd like to go to this website [slido.com](https://www.slido.com). Once you get to that website, you'll see this event. It'll ask you for the event code you see here on the screen, 1946 029. The first question I have for you all in a word just because it's a word cloud, we don't need whole sentences up here, but when you receive feedback on inclusive language for example if someone says to you what you said, what you wrote was offensive, how does that make you feel?

If someone thanks you for being inclusive in your language, how does that make you feel? I'm going to invite you to interpret that question in whatever way works for you. Then we will move forward. I will give some space for you all to respond to this poll. I invite you as you are seeing the responses come in, what sticks out to you? What do you feel like aligns with your experience?

What do you feel like is absolutely not what you experience and you're like this is a whole other thing that I don't know what's happening here. Again, I invite you to take this in and I'm going to mute for 30 seconds which is hard for me and then we're going to move forward.

**[pause 00:09:19]**

**Dr. Dr. Vanessa:** I made it 20 seconds. I'm proud of myself. Thank you all so much for your participation. This is the biggest word cloud I've ever had and I'm very excited. I will also invite you all to keep this poll open whatever you are using to access it because we will have one more question as we move forward in the

presentation. I am going to, for the sake of time move forward but again, I invite you to continue to put your responses in. You should be able to see the responses of your colleagues and peers engaged in this space as well.

What I'm going to do now is introduce myself. Peggy read a bio about me which typically, bios tend to hone in on our professional accolades which I'm proud of those, don't get me wrong. I always, in every presentation I do, I think it's important for me to situate myself as a person, and outline spaces in which I find community and identity because all of this that I'm about to say about myself, I carry through the work that I do.

I promise this is related to inclusive language, and I'm going to talk about it as we move forward. What I want to do is introduce myself as a person, because who I am as a person and how I identify, absolutely, again, influences the way that I moved through the world and the work that I do in the space of EDI.

I'm a psychologist. Spoiler alert. I'm a psychologist, a clinical psychologist by training. I didn't know I wanted to be a psychologist until I was like 20-something in college. My undergraduate degree from the University of Louisville is actually in engineering. My road that I took to get to psychology was one that was already just a list. In the beginning, there were many barriers. I just decided that I didn't like engineering, that I hated it, but I was already too close to getting my degree to stop.

I made the decision like, "Okay, I want to go into mental health." Of course, my ego said, "If you're going to go get a mental health degree, get the highest where you can get. Go and be a doctor," and here I am today. From the beginning, in professional spaces, not only while I was in graduate school, but even after, I felt like an imposter. I wasn't two years old when I decided I wanted to be a psychologist, like many people around me.

I always felt like I had more to do, more to learn, more to prove. I went to graduate school at the Chicago School of Professional Psychology, in a very large, diverse city. My program did not necessarily reflect that diversity. Even being a person of color, in a graduate program, I often again, I felt like I had to do something to set myself apart. I'm a millennial. I'm going to say that out loud, I'm a millennial. We get blamed for a lot of stuff.

Millennials, we get a bad rap for having student loan debt and buying coffees, and eating out, and I don't know why. I'm going to have to **[unintelligible 00:12:46]** whatever that also influences the way that I move through the world. I think particularly in psychology, something we don't always talk about is those cohort differences and differences generationally that we see that we may not always address, or we may not always think about as an aspect of diversity.

I'm also biracial. I'm a Black woman with a White mom. I say that because it took me a long time to feel any level of comfort, identifying as a Black woman, because my mom is White because I'm biracial. It wasn't until I really started to dive deep into my studies around dynamics of race racism, that I really started to understand, like, why was experiencing that tension, and then get to a place where I felt like I could walk in that truth of my racial identity. I identify as a Black woman.

I'm also somebody's wife, married to a whole White man. If you would have told Vanessa 10 years ago that she would marry a White man from rural Wisconsin, she'd have told you he was lying. Here I am. I think that again, being in an interracial relationship, one would not think in 2022, that was a big deal, it absolutely is. The fact that they're still fighting for laws related to interracial marriage is just beyond me.

Anyways, I feel like that is an aspect of my identity that absolutely influences the way I navigate this space. Then lastly, I'm a huge nerd, if you can't see these Funko Pops behind me. I am a nerd to the core. I love pop culture. I love everything about it. I go to comic book conventions, and speak on panels and talk about things. It's so great, and it's so rejuvenating to me. It is part of who I am and how I identify.

Again, for me, I don't like this language necessarily, but I want to model this understanding of identity for myself because again, that undoubtedly affects the way that I move through the world as a psychologist. I know that for some of us, that can be uncomfortable or we can feel like what does this have to do with the work that I do? It has everything to do with the work that you do because it has everything to do with who you are as a person. That's not something that we can leave behind.

As we go through this conversation and start to talk more about inclusive language, I invite you to think about who you are, how you identify, spaces in which you find community, and how that has influenced your worldview because your worldview absolutely impacts the way that you utilize language and language that you value and things that you value.

With that being said, we're going to move into talking specifically about inclusive language. As I mentioned, we're going to first start with talking about what inclusive language is. Before doing that, I promise you, one more question in our poll, again, a word cloud. When you think about barriers to utilizing inclusive language in a word or two because there's the word cloud, what would you say are those primary barriers?

You can put as many in as you want, but what would you say are barriers to being inclusive in your language, both written and spoken? I really am going to mute for 30 seconds this time and then we're going to move forward.

**[pause 00:16:00]**

**Dr. Dr. Vanessa:** I made it a whole 30 seconds. Thank you all so much for your participation. I appreciate this. Again, I invite you to take in what you see here on the screen. Again, with this word cloud, the words that you see that are in color that are bigger, are ones that people respond, the responses you see most often. It looks like for us in this space today, a lack of knowledge is the primary barrier to utilizing inclusive language.

For the sake of time, I'm going to move forward, I invite you all again, to continue to put in those responses, excuse me, and to think about how you feel about what it is that you're seeing. If we want to understand inclusive language, we first have to understand what do we mean by inclusive or inclusion. This definition is taken from APAs Equity Diversity and Inclusion framework or the EDI framework for short.

When we think about inclusion, I don't know if inclusion is a verb. I'm going to use it as a verb in this sense because inclusion is something that requires a constant vigilance. It requires action. It requires activities, not just something that manifests from the sky. We have to do things to promote inclusivity. When we think about inclusive environments, we think about those that affirm, celebrate, and appreciate all people.

No matter how they identify, no matter what they look like, no matter their political values, all people are valued and in inclusive environments, individuals feel free to bring their whole and authentic selves to the space without fear of reproach or being devalued. An inclusive space is one that cultivates an environment of affirmation, celebration, and appreciation for all people.

When we think about what that means, with regards to inclusive language, I will point you all to a resource that we have at APA called the inclusive language guidelines. Now, these guidelines were first released last December. Oh my gosh, we're almost like a year now. We're actually in the process of working on the second iteration of this document, which will probably come out at the beginning of the year. Don't quote me on that.

I'm pretty sure it's slated to come out at the beginning of the year. Ostensibly, the inclusive language guidelines are just that, they're guidelines. They're not mandates. We're not going to send the EDI police to your house if you don't follow every single thing in these guidelines. Absolutely not. The guidelines include affirming language that seeks to empower historically marginalized communities and again, promote inclusivity, promote affirmation, celebration, valuing of people who have been historically marginalized.

As I mentioned, as soon as the inclusive language guidelines were released, they were already outdated. They also were incomplete. There's no way we could have any document that was wholly inclusive. I don't say inclusive. I don't want to promote the idea that there's any document that's going to **[unintelligible 00:19:34]** inclusive because there's not. That is why we remain flexible and iterative in our way of thinking about language.

This is a place to start though, and I'm going to talk a little bit more in the latter half of the presentation about that underlying attitude, that underlying mental model that we have to maintain when we're thinking about inclusive language. There is no one right way to be. The right way to be depends on the person that you're talking to. Depends on the person you're engaging with. Depends on you.

I want to say that initially, before we start talking about some of these strategies that I'm not saying that this is the only way to be, I'm not saying that this is the correct way to be, I'm offering a perspective because those perspective shifts shift because people are not monoliths. We can't say like all Black people or all trans men or all children think or do things a certain way because that's just not true.

The intention behind the inclusive language guidelines was to build a common vocabulary for APA and psychologists, that's grounded in EDI principles. When you look at the inclusive language guidelines, which I know there will be a link share for

you all, this is a free resource that's available online, it's divided into these two broad categories. Being inclusive in your writing, and then also ways to avoid microaggressions in conversation.

We're going to pull out some of those things now to really talk about some specific examples. Again, I invite you all to think about the way that you market yourself because again, I don't want to be prescriptive in anything that I'm talking about because what I'm saying may or may not work for you, I just want to offer perspective.

As we're going through some of these strategies, think about how that may or may not fit one, into your worldview, and two, the way that you sort of market yourself in your marketing efforts. This is an example taken directly from the inclusive language guidelines. It's one that we hear so often. One that historically a term that APA has historically used. The term pipeline.

When we talk about the school-to-prison pipeline, or we talk about the pipeline of psychologists coming from college to graduate schools into the profession, that term can be considered offensive by our first nations colleagues given sort of the connotation and the traumatic history surrounding this term. This is an excerpt taken from the inclusive language guidelines, but in the guidelines, it talks about, okay, why this may be not inclusive, why this may be offensive to people.

The alternative, the suggested alternative is pathway. It's something that I'm still working on, I'm absolutely still working on. I don't want to promote this idea that I just do everything right all the time because no but I'm very cognizant of that. I try very hard to be mindful about the language that I use.

This is one again, because within APA and even within the discipline of psychology, we often talk about people coming through sort of matriculating throughout their career and pipeline is a term that has often been used. Again, this is just an example. As you think about what it is that you do and how it is that you market yourself, is this maybe something that you have used, they say this word on the news all the time. Is this something that maybe you have used, and again, I just invite you to think about the suggested alternative of pathway.

Another example that's included in the inclusive language guidelines is this idea around person-first language. This is, I think, are salient to people who are in clinical practice. When you're thinking about marketing, what you do in clinical practicing, I've worked with individuals with X, Y, and Z diagnoses, whatever it is that you want to say about what you do, how are you describing those things and the inclusive language guidelines, talk about person-first language.

Not reducing people to a diagnosis, to a condition whatever, but leading with their personhood first. I want to also say that there are certain communities, for example in the autism community, this does not apply right to a lot of people. In that sort of neurodiverse community, people can prefer the term autistic as a term, as opposed to person with autism. Again, this is not a one-size-fits-all, this is not a everybody's going to love you if you speak or write like this, I don't want to promote that.

I do again, as I mentioned, want to promote awareness around some of these things and again, offer different perspectives. Again, this is another example taken from the inclusive language guidelines. Again, thinking about what it is that you do in marketing yourself, whether you are a clinician, whether you're talking about past work, that you've done, research that you've done, how are you describing those things? How are you describing people that you've worked with?

Another one that comes out often, again is the use of pronouns. I will say for the 10,000 time, there's no one right way to do anything. These are simply perspectives. In the inclusive language guidelines, they talk a little bit about gender inclusive versus gender exclusive language. Typically, and again, for those of you who may have been in school recently, some of the things, or may still be in school, bless you.

Some of the books that we read or articles we read from like the 1800s or whenever, still use he whenever they're describing anything. Is he did this, he did this. All the time, right? That's exclusive, because for so many reasons. For so many obvious reasons. When you are referring to a group of folks, that might be an alternative.

As opposed to saying ladies and gentlemen, as opposed to saying you guys, as opposed to saying congressmen, those things are exclusive. Gender-inclusive alternatives include you all. I grew up in Louisville a little bit I say y'all often, inclusive, right? Folks, you know what I'm saying, again, those are things, whether you are thinking about how you market or again, even when you're talking or presenting with folks being knowledgeable about those things.

Now, when we think about pronoun usage, this is again something that I think comes up often and people may become hesitant due to a lack of knowledge, and so first, welcome. I appreciate that. I appreciate people being mindful that they may not have all of the knowledge, what I will say though and spoiler alert, all you got to do is ask in terms of thinking about pronoun usage.

For me, particularly before coming to APA, I worked in the clinical space. It became customary to always ask everyone what are their pronouns. Not just people who like, oh, I have a question, everyone. It just becomes standard practice. I think similarly, when you think about sharing your pronouns again, if we make it standard practice, we can be inclusive of all people and not put the pressure sort of on people to make that known. We want to create spaces that feel psychologically safe for people to again, engage in as their true selves.

As I mentioned, these are specific excerpts taken from the inclusive language guidelines with regard to pronoun usage. If you ever have a question, one, ask, and two, instead of assuming and ascribing pronouns to people without knowing, you can always use the term the singular they, I don't want to say always, because again, I don't want to advocate that there's more right way to be, but again, when thinking about pronoun usage and even sharing your pronouns in your marketing efforts, like is that something that you indicate very clearly, and if not, again I'm not here to tell you should or you shouldn't, just thinking about what messages those might send.

Also to think about what may be the benefit of being very clear and explicit about your use of pronouns.



I mentioned, the inclusive language guidelines were already outdated as soon as they were released because language is always evolving. It doesn't stop. You've heard that old adage, the only thing constant is change. Language is always changing, and the other thing that I'll say is that what is cool for some people is not going to be cool for others.

I think one thing that we have to do, which is what we're going to move into talking about now is change this idea that once we figure it out, then we have it and that's the only thing we have to do. As I mentioned, inclusion requires a constant vigilance. You're constantly learning. We are moving away from this confidence-based model.

I can just get all the information and get to this place where I have mastery and I can just know all the things. In the space of EDI, that does not exist. EDI requires a constant vigilance. When you think about inclusive language, it too requires a vigilance. We're going to talk a little bit about what that looks like. I'm reminded of humility. We talk about cultural humility. Humility requires a tolerance to make mistakes and take risks.

It's the same with language. It will benefit us and we all could try our hardest not to offend, undoubtedly, you're going to do that. Undoubtedly, that's going to happen. We're going to talk about sort of how we manage that, and some strategies for us to move forward and be more inclusive in our language and stay sort of up to date, for lack of a better word, on ways that we can sort of maintain this vigilance. Make inclusive language a part of your life, not just a part of your job. If I am only striving to be mindful at work and not in my home life, that facade is going to come down real quick. That mask is going to come down real quick. We're going to talk about that as we move forward into this latter part of the presentation, but make that a part of your life in all aspects, no matter who you're talking to. I know that that sounds exhausting. I know that that sounds like, "Woohoo. I don't know about all that." I understand. EDI is my life. It's what I do day in and day out. It is exhausting let me tell you something.

That's when we figure out how to take care of ourselves, but make inclusive language a part of your life. Things that you can do, read resources, APA has resources, but APA is not the only gig in town. Read resources about inclusivity, about inclusive language. If there are specific populations that you're working with or specific areas of research that you're interested in or specific sectors that you work in, read about inclusive language that are specific to those things and maintain that knowledge.

Follow EDI topics on social media, whatever social looks like for you, Instagram, Reddit, Twitter, TikTok, if you're cool out here with the children. [chuckles] Do what you need to do. There are spaces, there is so much information out here that we can follow with caution because everybody with a phone is an expert nowadays. Maintain that vigilance and follow EDI topics on social media. Get on newsletters and different listserves. There are people, again and this is their job to cultivate this information.

There are so many other things you can do also. I invite you to think about ways that if you're not already doing so, you can make inclusive language a part of your life. If you are already doing so, live your best life and continue to spread the good word,

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and share those strategies with others. The other thing that I would suggest is to cultivate a nonjudgmental growth mindset. We understand the difference between growth and fixed mindset. Allow yourself grace. We say this all the time in the space of EDI, allow yourself grace.

I don't expect anybody, myself, anyone to get it right all the time. That's just not possible. I don't expect that type of perfection. Allow yourself that grace. "I'm going to do a DBT thing," and both and, allow yourself that grace and hold yourself accountable to your actions, to your behavior, to your words. When you think about again, how it is that you're describing yourself, what you do, what it is that you want to do with others in the world, allow yourself grace to know that you're not going to get it perfectly right every time. Also, call yourself up to try as much as you can to cultivate spaces of inclusivity.

How do you maintain this mindset? I just talked about cultivating a nonjudgmental growth mindset. What are some ways that we can do that? First and foremost, understanding that language matters, understanding that the words we use are key to creating psychological safety, to cultivating inclusivity, and to be welcoming and respectful to all people. I invite you all to think about what it is that you do. What was the reason that you wanted to come or watch this webinar today? Some thought you had about how you market yourself and how you can do so in a way that promotes inclusivity.

In so doing and thinking about your motivations and your professional spaces, do you want those spaces to be psychologically safe? Do you want those spaces to be respectful and welcoming to all people? If so, I think part of doing that is understanding that what we say and more importantly, how we are, it matters. It absolutely matters. When we think about psychological safety, this again is something that's taken from the EDI framework. I know psychological safety, there are like 1,000,001, 50, 11 things you can look up related to psychological safety. What does it mean?

I'm going to use this definition as a point of departure in thinking about psychological safety, particularly within the discipline of psychology. As psychologists within the discipline of psychology, when we think about psychological safety, we want to cultivate spaces that foster inclusivity, inclusion like we've talked about, and safe engagement for all people so people like me who came into graduate school with 20 hours of undergrad psych like, "Hey, what's up? I'm here. What's up?" How can we foster safe engagement for all people within the discipline of psychology and then ultimately out in the world and the work that we do as psychologists?

When we think about psychological safety, the first thing we need to do, and I invite you to think about this in terms of your own EDI journey. The first thing we really need to acknowledge is who have I, who has the world, who has psychology, who has this institution, who have they not been kind to, who has been harmed historically? Again, we can think about that on many different levels. We can think about that on larger macro scales. I can think about myself as an individual. I have individual biases that have definitely manifested and caused harm to people in the past.

The first thing that I need to do when I'm really thinking about cultivating that safety is to think about where did I go wrong? Who was affected when it went wrong and what was the impacts of what it is that went wrong? Prior to thinking about what it is that we're going to do, I think in our westernized world, we're always so quick to do so, like, "Let me do this, let me do this, let me do this." I would argue that if we want to cultivate these spaces of safety and inclusivity, the first thing we need to do is figure out what it is that we're trying to correct for lack of a better word.

Before moving in and saying, "I'm going to change my website, I'm going to change my LinkedIn. I'm going to do all these things," before you move to do those things really try to gain an understanding about what it is that you're moving away from. Really be explicit in thinking about those things. I'm going to talk just very briefly, just like two seconds about microaggressions because when we think about the reason that we want to be more inclusive in our language is that we want to promote professional environments that we are engaged in that are psychologically safe.

The most common threat to psychological safety in these spaces are microaggressions. Microaggressions are things that can be intentional or otherwise they can be behavioral or verbal. When you think about inclusive language, we think about writing. We think about the conversation. What they have in common though, is that they communicate negative ideas about people with a specific identity. What this does is cause harm or negative psychological impact to the people that are aggressed. Again, no one on this earth is immune from microaggressing someone. I don't care how much you could be the president of the EDI club. Oh my goodness. I don't know why that's doing that.

You could be the president of the EDI club, that doesn't mean that you are immune from aggressing people. Whether we intended to do so or not in our language, in our conversation, we have the propensity to harm people. I think that when we talk about cultivating this non-judgmental growth mindset, that's something that we have to keep in mind. No matter how well intended we are, we have the potential to harm. Just because you didn't mean to doesn't mean it didn't happen. That brings me to bring all of this home, why then is it important that we are so mindful about the language that we use? Again, we're talking specifically about how we market ourselves.

Again, for me, marketing yourself and being inclusive in that space is about cultivating whatever professional environment it is that you're cultivating. A practice, teaching, a research facility, applied psychology, whatever it is that you're doing, cultivating that professional space that is safe, respectful, and welcoming to all people. In so doing, we want to reduce threats to psychological safety and increase, again, cultivate respectful, welcoming, inclusive spaces. That is why maintaining our mindset is so important because again, we can do all the strategy things we want. We can put pronouns, we can use whatever flowery language we want. Anti-racism, social justice in the way that we market things.

If we don't simultaneously work on that underlying mindset and attitude, what we are doing is being attuned to the window dressing and not what's inside the house. Which there's nothing wrong with the window dressing. We want it to look good on the outside too. We also want there to be some substance inside the building, inside

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the house. When we think about all of that that I just said [chuckles] and why inclusive language is important, these are some things I invite you to take away as we move into our question and answer portion today.

One is that when we assume that we understand how it is, we assume that we understand everybody's reality. We assume we see someone, we understand the way that they identify and we assume that that means we know something about their lived experience, those assumptions limit us from a number of things. They limit us from being truly present and from realizing our full potential. I cannot be with you fully and then in so doing fully recognize my potential if I'm spending all of this time just assuming I know something about you. If I'm spending all this time looking at you and making assumptions in my mind.

When we think about what that means with regard to inclusive language, one, we can't make those assumptions about ourselves. We can't assume that I should just know this or I should just know that. We also should not assume that we know how or why people value certain things. The one thing that if there's any takeaway from this, I would say is thinking about inclusive language with regard to humility. Approaching inclusive language, not from a space of competence, but from a space of curiosity and investigation.

Hopefully, no one came here, again, expecting to get a PhD in inclusivity because that's [chuckles] just not going to happen. If there's anything that you all take away from this with regard to the utilization of inclusive language, it would be to do so with a humble and curious space, from a non-judgmental space. The last thing that I'll say is if we don't acknowledge that our lived experience is ours and ours alone and that one, that's not everybody's reality, and two, that that influences my worldview.

If I don't understand that my lived experience and everything I said at the beginning when I was explaining like, "This is who I am. I'm this, I'm that," all of that influences my worldview. It influences the way that I view myself, the way that I view others, the way that I value myself, the way that I value others. If we refuse to acknowledge those things, we're [chuckles] never going to get to the place where all-- I don't want to say all, where it is more the norm than the exception that we are cultivating these spaces that are safe and welcoming, so that marginalized folks no longer have to live and be in fear of being devalued.

The way that we work to really acknowledge and understand others' ways of being, ways of knowing, ways of valuing is by having those conversations. By again, approaching spaces from a place of curiosity and vulnerability, I think that we'll be able to, again, make inclusive language the norm rather than the exception. With that, I will end this by saying, I invite you all to, one, take a moment to reflect because I just said a lot in a little bit of time. I invite [chuckles] everybody to just reflect on how they feel about all of that that was just said.

I will just take this opportunity for myself also, to just stop and reflect a little bit and to remind you all that I could very well have spent this last, however long we've been together, 40 minutes, talking about the do's and don'ts. Talking about do this, don't do this, which is fine. To me, again, is a window dressing, which is not bad. It's not something we should ignore. If that window dressing is misaligned from the way that

you feel, from your personal values, from your worldview, that window dressing is going to be temporary. It's also going to be inauthentic.

The people that you are hoping to welcome and engage in your professional spaces are going to notice that very [chuckles] quickly. What I invite from you all, and I promise this is the last thing I'm going to say, to take from this is that when you think about inclusive language, when you can think about how you market yourself, do so in a way that is true to you. That is authentically you with an understanding of how that might influence others around you. Again, I'm not asking you to do or be anything other than your truth. I'm asking you to take that next step and also consider what you say, how what you say, and how you are influences others in this shared space that we live life in.

With that, before we move into questions and answers, I just want to say thank you all so, so much for the opportunity to share this space with you all. It's been so fun. [chuckles] I thank you all for taking this time out, like I said, in the middle of your day. I will now defer to Peggy to go through some of the questions that we have.

**Peggy:** Thank you, Dr. Hence. That was an amazing presentation and very insightful and engaging. Yes, we have a ton of questions and very little time, but we'll see what we can get to. Let's start with this. I thought this was a good way to start. There are so many anacronyms. How did you and APA decide to go with EDI versus DEI or JEDI? Maybe start there.

**Dr. Vanessa:** I will say I didn't make that decision. [chuckles] It was made when I got here. What I will say though based upon my institutional knowledge is that there was an intentional decision to lead with equity. Again, there are 1,000,001 acronyms, 10,001, and I don't think there is any one right way to be right. For APA in the commissioning of the EDI office, leading with equity was paramount. Equity, we didn't talk about this in the presentation, but the definition of equity is we think about that as providing resources according to need, which is very different than equality, which is what people are used to.

Equality, everybody does the same thing all the time, no ifs, ands, or buts about it. For APA and the development of the EDI strategy, it was important that we acknowledged that that understanding of equity and that resources are provided according to need. There are people who have different needs based on their experiences, based on their worldviews. We wanted to lead with that. I would say that that was part of the decision being made, again, just based on my institutional knowledge.

**Peggy:** You could say that DEI and EDI are interchangeable, it's just that APA made the decision to put the emphasis first on equity. Is that correct to say that?

**Dr. Vanessa:** I wouldn't necessarily call them interchangeable because I do think that even the way people understand those terms-- in APA's EDI framework, there are specific definitions of equity, diversity, and inclusion that are very specific about this is how the association understands these terms. I wouldn't say that there are universal definitions of those terms. I would say that those can be dependent on organizations and dependent on individuals. I think that and anybody knows EDI,

DEI, JEDI idea, whatever it is for you, do that and understand those things in a way that is most authentic to you. For the association, equity, diversity, and inclusion as they have defined them is most authentic to APA.

**Peggy:** Let's move on to this question. What is your recommendation for researchers and graduate students who are citing research where populations were identified with outdated language? You're doing a report and you're looking at research from the 80s. What do you do?

**Dr. Vanessa:** I think this happens often because not to say that [chuckles] research should be discounted in any way. I think one thing that we have promoted is making some sort of almost like a disclaimer. If you're taking a direct quote from a study, and they use an outdated, perhaps offensive term, I at all costs would try to just not even include that. If you have to include it for citation purposes or whatever, I would include some sort of disclaimer in saying that like, "The authors understand that this term is outdated." I think that making that known is important.

Again, the first thing I would say is, if there's any way to not directly quote that, I would do that. If you have to directly quote that, again, for citation purposes, I would put some sort of disclaimer in there about why that term might be offensive.

**Peggy:** Let me just scroll back here. There was a question about obviously, we have the APA guidelines, but they wanted to know if there were any specific resources or perhaps even a newsletter, where they could follow inclusive language as it's evolving. Do you know of anything like that?

**Dr. Vanessa:** I do and it is slipping my mind in this moment. I was just having this conversation with someone last week and it's really going to bother me. It starts with a B, but I can't think of it. It's one word. It's like levity or something like that. I don't even want to tell a lie. I will google it.

**Peggy:** If anyone in our audience maybe-- put it in the Q&A. We'll get you that information. We'll include it with the recording. How does that sound?

**Dr. Vanessa:** We'll find it.

**Peggy:** Another question we have, we do have some questions still around pronouns, and I think the resource can be helpful there but let's go through some of them. When I am unsure of a client's pronoun during intake, so this is a clinician here, what is the appropriate language aside from their name?

**Dr. Vanessa:** I would say in terms of when we're doing our intake paperwork, one thing that I would say, you ask people their name, date of birth, what are your pronouns and I think that-- I was practicing-- seems like a long time ago now, [chuckles] but it was not even a year ago and sometimes people would respond and say, "What? What are pronouns?" Which is an opportunity to educate folks but I think just asking it as plainly as that, "What are your pronouns?"

Again, if people feel uncomfortable or they're like, "I don't want to do da, da, da, da," cool. You did your part though. That's exactly how I would say it. In the course of the intake, what are your pronouns? You could also even model it when you introduce

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yourself and just say-- I would say "I'm Dr. Vanessa, I use she/her pronouns." Then again, another opportunity may be to educate folks.

**Peggy:** Do you think it's standard practice now to be stating pronouns in email signatures and professional profiles, I guess on LinkedIn, those places?

**Dr. Vanessa:** Standard, no, because I think that we still have a long way to go. I think it's getting better. I think that it is not-- I don't think that it has become standard because again, I think that we still got a lot to go. There's progress though. I will say that there's progress.

**Peggy:** What is the best way to use inclusive language when referencing individuals we work with?

**Dr. Vanessa:** I want to make sure I understand the question and I don't know if you're talking specifically about clinical work. I would invite you to check out the inclusive language guidelines but one example I can think of readily is referring to people in AODA treatment as addicts as opposed to people with addiction, or people with substance use, whatever you want to say. I think that the more we can, again, remember the humanness, and the peopleness [chuckles] of folks, I think that that can be a good rule of thumb. Again, with understandings that in different spaces and in different communities, that's not always the case.

**Peggy:** What are strategies for correcting someone on their use of non-inclusive wording or language, and what would you say is a respectful way to do that?

**Dr. Vanessa:** [chuckles] It's interesting because I would say I always fall back to clinical [chuckles] skills in terms of using I statements and so I never want to promote that you shouldn't say that. I don't ever want to say that to anyone because again, I don't want to pronounce or presume that there's only one way to be. What I do want people to know is how what they said has affected me. Formula for an I statement, "I felt blank when you blank because blank."

If there's a way that you could say, "I felt offended, I felt hurt, when you used the term whatever, because da, da, da, da, da." I think that to me, that disarms people when you're focusing on your feelings, and not on the morality or the rightness of what people are doing because I think when we get into moral discussions, things just always go all the way left and so if there's a way that we can focus on the harm that was done and I statements, with the understanding that some people are not even going to care about that either again, you did your part though. You did your part.

**Peggy:** I think this is something similar, but this one person is, I'm concerned that I might unintentionally offend someone and they won't let me know about it, which leaves me ignorant and unable to learn. I sometimes don't realize something could have been offensive until later. Do you have any suggestions? I guess this is wanting to be self-aware.

**Dr. Vanessa:** I would say that similar to what we talked about with regard to engaging in your own work, in your own journey because the one thing that I would

say is, it's not other people's jobs to educate us. We don't want to put that onus on other people. I think that one thing to do is again to do your own study and also to-- I think that when we start to maintain and when we start to live out these values and when we start to be in a way that promotes inclusivity, we increase psychological safety so that we can have those conversations with folks.

We can say like, "Hey, when I said this, I wanted to make sure we're cool, we're good." Those conversations don't happen without psychological safety and without a fostering of inclusivity. I think that we can initiate those conversations with our colleagues, with our friends, with people, if we have an understanding, or if we feel like we may have harmed someone, we can't put that onus on someone though, because someone absolutely reserves the right to say, "I don't care about anything [chuckles] that you're saying right now, get out of my face."

I think that those would be my strategies for lack of a better word to be to engage in your own learning. Also, to again, be sure that our behaviors that we are living out promote safety so that we can have those conversations with folks because I don't think that there's a right or wrong way to do it. What I think is not helpful though as I mentioned is to put the onus on other people to let us know that they're offended because again, I'm not going to do that if I don't feel safe to do so. If I don't feel like you care that you're offended me, why would I put myself out there? Why would I be vulnerable if I don't feel safe to do so?

**Peggy:** Another question is what do you think are the key contributions that psychologists bring to this area, this field?

**Dr. Vanessa:** I'm so biased.

[laughter]

**Venessa:** I think we bring a lot. I think one, that at the root of microaggressions, discriminatory behaviors are the ways that we value others. I think that psychology as the science of human behavior, as the science of being, of existing, we have language, science to use to talk about that process of valuing. Even we can talk about the neurobiology of implicit bias all we want to. We can talk about the cognitive, all of that of implicit bias. We also can talk about the feelings about valuing and the ways that-- as I mentioned at the beginning, who I am influences how I move through the world.

Psychology to me has so much to offer in this space because again, in the EDI space, we want to move away from strategies that increase representation only. That is important and if we really want to work on the inside of the building and not just the outside, we have to get down into talking about the feeling related to EDI, related to valuing, related to honoring difference. All of those things, feelings, and how those feelings then manifest in our behaviors, that's what we do. That's what we do as psychologists.

I think we have so much to offer. I would just invite everyone, whether you're a psychologist or a psychologist in training or a student or whoever, to remind yourself



of that. We have the tools we need to do this work, it's difficult, it's uncomfortable and we have all the tools that we need to do it.

**Peggy:** I think that's actually a really powerful way to conclude our presentation today and conclude our question and answer. Thank you so much, Dr. Hence for your presentation, your insightful comments. I want to thank all of our listeners for your participation, all of your questions. I'm sorry, we couldn't get to all of them but I have some exciting news, so hang in there. I just want to get a couple of things out of the way first. I just want to let everyone know a recording of this presentation along with the slides and a link to our APAs, inclusive language guidelines, PDF documentation will be emailed to everyone in two weeks.

We're also going to track down that newsletter and we'll include a link to that as well. As soon as this webinar has ended, a short survey will appear on your screen. We hope you'll take just a few minutes to complete the survey. Give us feedback on how we did and how we can continue to improve. Now, this is the exciting part. Dr. Hence will be back. Yes, she's coming back to discuss using inclusive language in your presentations.

She's going to be back on October 25th at 2:00 PM Eastern and we really hope that you can join us. We're going to send you out a link to this future presentation and you can register for that. It's going to be great. Please come back and join us again. That's all we have time for today. We hope you had a great experience and we hope you have a great day.

**[01:00:36] [END OF AUDIO]**