Examining biases and social narratives

Go down list and underline **all** the groups you need to reflect on, then pick:
- One group you feel you know little about
- One group you are feeling judgement towards

Explore the narratives that exist in society for both groups and reflect on:
- Whose voice is telling their story?
- How much of their story are you hearing?
- How much time and effort are you prepared to give to seek out their real stories?
- What are you going to do with your defensiveness and their anger?

Fat people
Migrants
Trans people
People on benefits
Disfigured people
Roma/traveller people
Sex workers
Mentally ill people
Neurodivergent people (e.g. autism, ADHD)
Asexual people (i.e. feel no sexual attraction)
People living in poverty
HIV positive people
People living with chronic illness
"Unattractive" people
Black people
East Asian people
Bisexual people
Lesbians
Gay people
Non-binary people
Working class/underclass people
Women

Muslims
Children
People of colour
Elderly people
Religious minorities
South Asian people
Teenagers
Intersex people
Polyamorous people
Gender non-conforming people
Queer people (this word is a "reclaimed" word used in-community)
Jews
Alternative beliefs and lifestyles e.g. vegan, living communally
Refugees and asylum seekers
Unmarried people
Indigenous people
Married people
People who are into kink/BDSM
Physically disabled people
People with dreadlocks
People from other cultures dressing traditionally

Structures that support our biases

Supremacy
The idea that one group is inherently superior to another, e.g. "it's ok to be gay/trans, but it's better to be straight", "black people tend to be poorer than white people because they have lower intelligence" "autistic people are better off learning to be more like neurotypical people", "sex workers should be helped to get out of that work (whether or not they want to)".

Hierarchy
The hidden pecking order that exists in society. This manifests when people expect minorities to be "polite", experience them as "patronising", expect them to ask nicely, rather than make demands or get angry, assume they are not going to be much represented in board rooms, parliament, expect them to be spoken for rather than do much speaking, feel they are "dominating" or "the pendulum has swung too far" when small gains are made.

Assimilation
The idea that minorities should make an effort to blend in with the dominant (assumed to be superior) culture, e.g. "people with dreadlocks/hijabs/saris should make more effort to fit in", "it's ok to be gay but why do they need to shove it in my face", "travellers cause problems because of the way they live", "trans people are more acceptable when they look like cis people".

The "killjoy" phenomenon (Sara Ahmed)
Much like the idea of "shoot the messenger", the "killjoy" is a toxic idea applied to a minority person who makes a fuss about inequality rather than remaining silent and maintaining the status quo. Ways of maintaining the status quo in this way include "black activists are too angry – they don't help their own cause" "it's just banter, don't be so humourless", "she's just one of those uptight feminists". The opposite of the "killjoy" is the "good example" who takes a role as a "positive representative" of their group, often by politely and quietly joining in with the dominant group and disparaging activists from within their own group.

"Fragility"
In which the person with power reacts strongly and negatively to any discourse about oppression. The term was coined by Robin DiAngelo who says: "I have found that the only way to give feedback without triggering white fragility is not to give it at all . . . [these tactics] work to reinstate white equilibrium as they repel the challenge, return our racial comfort, and maintain our dominance within the racial hierarchy."

Denying, minimising, blaming
This is a systemic strategy that both perpetrators and bystanders use to avoid acting when a person protests about abuse, bullying and oppression. "I don't see any transphobia in our organisation", "you're making a big fuss over something minor", "you brought it on yourself", "no wonder people don't support trans people when a trans person behaves like you", "black people were involved in slavery too", "many chronically ill people smoke/take drugs/eat the wrong food/don't exercise", "poor people don't know how to budget".

Pathologising
Pathologising a population means ignoring the minority stress, colonisation and poverty issues that might lead to cultural/social problems or mental health issues within that group, and instead making those issues "inherent". Examples: "asexuality isn't a sexual orientation, the person is just damaged", "other cultures treat LGBT people badly", "black people have more criminal tendencies than white people", "Roma people are anti-social".