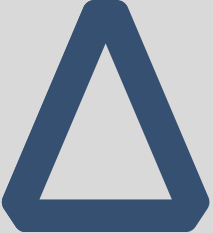






HOW TO CHALLENGE ANTI-HOMELESSNESS

It is important to challenge assumptions and thoughts we have about people who experience homelessness (PEH). Here are some strategies to help bust common thought patterns, myths, or stereotypes:

	<p>Change common anti-homelessness attitudes</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="407 512 764 764"> <p><u>Anti-homelessness might sound like:</u> "Homeless people want and need my help, so I should intervene if I think someone is struggling to do something on their own."</p> </td> <td data-bbox="764 512 1089 764"> <p><u>Potential messages conveyed or received:</u> PEH are helpless. PEH are all in need of charity or "saving."</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1089 512 1474 764"> <p><u>A helpful reframe might sound like:</u> PEH are the best authority when it comes to their own support needs. If I think someone might need help, I can ask them rather than assuming.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><u>Anti-homelessness might sound like:</u> "Homeless people want and need my help, so I should intervene if I think someone is struggling to do something on their own."</p>	<p><u>Potential messages conveyed or received:</u> PEH are helpless. PEH are all in need of charity or "saving."</p>	<p><u>A helpful reframe might sound like:</u> PEH are the best authority when it comes to their own support needs. If I think someone might need help, I can ask them rather than assuming.</p>
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<p>Challenge myths with facts and stories</p> <p>Someone says: "People experiencing homelessness are just lazy."</p> <p>Response: Share data showing that many PEH do work such as day laborers, gig economy workers, people who recycle (metals, cans, bottles, etc.), and personal care attendants to other members in their community. Low wages, lack of affordable housing, and the high cost of living in the Bay Area are the main drivers of homelessness.</p>				
	<p>Reframe the narrative around homelessness</p> <p>Someone says: "People made poor choices and these are the consequences."</p> <p>Response: Explain how evictions, job loss, domestic violence, mental health crises, loss of intergenerational assets/wealth, and gentrification trigger homelessness. These are public systems failures, not the failures of individuals.</p>			
<p>Highlight successful interventions</p> <p>Show case "Housing First" models where providing housing before anything else (sobriety, employment, etc.) has led to higher housing retention and lower public costs compared to any other model. People don't have to 'fix' themselves before their ready to become housed.</p>				
	<p>Humanize people with lived experience</p> <p>Use public speaking events, social media, or community forums to elevate the voices of those who've experienced homelessness and to share their ideas for how to make adjustments to the environment in ways that will better meet their needs. Direct testimony breaks stereotypes and builds compassion, especially when listeners relate to the individual's humanity and resilience.</p>			