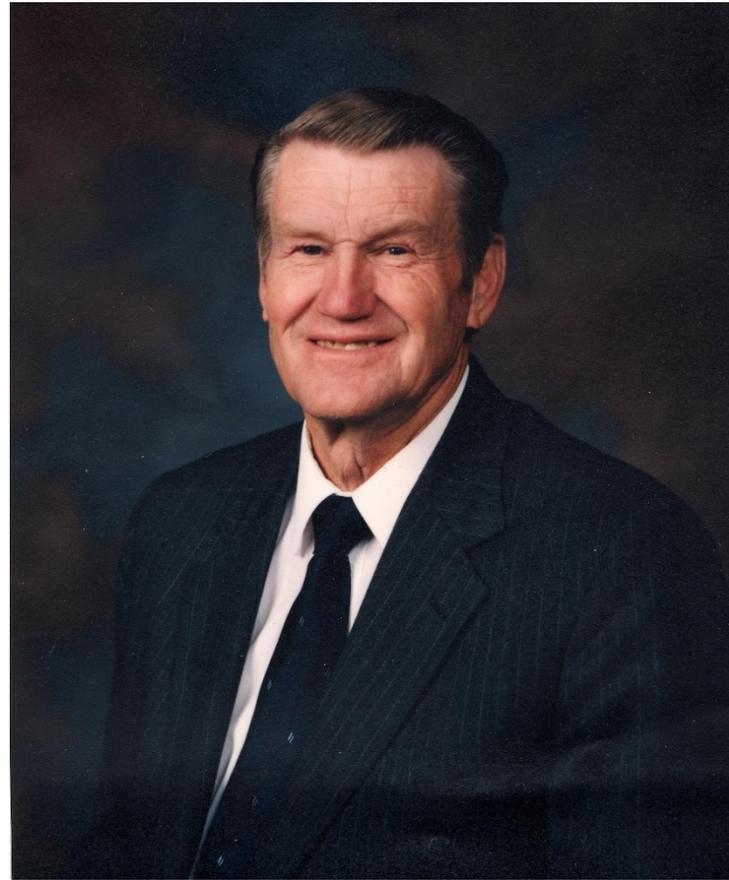


BIAS: FRIEND OR FOE?

By Dean F. Anderson L.C.S.W.

September 24, 2020

We Are the Sum of Our Experiences



George M. Anderson 1924 - 2016

PERSPECTIVE IS EVERYTHING

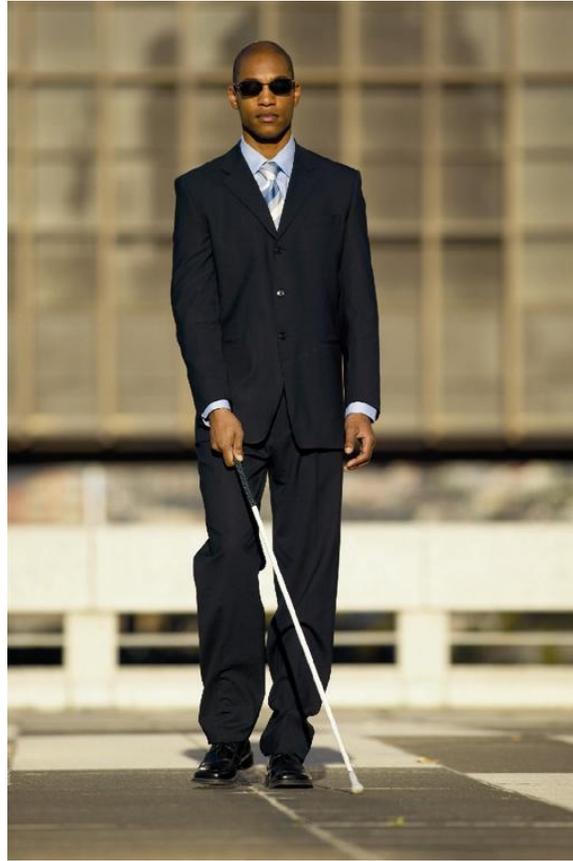


Grass Is Always Greener Where You Water It

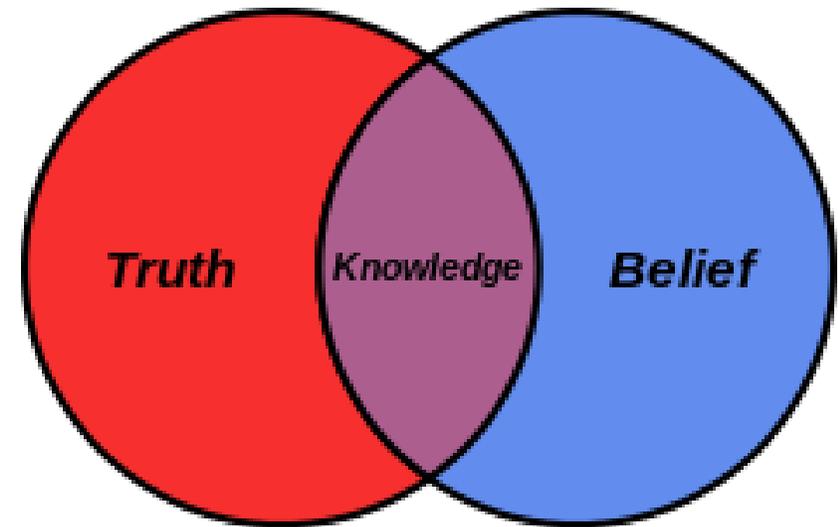


What are your beliefs or biases about
blind people?





What are your beliefs and biases about people who have mental illness?





Myths About Mental Illness

- Caused by bad parenting
- Caused by sin
- Caused from lack of spirituality
- Can be cured by reading scriptures and prayer
- Can be stopped if one has enough desire
- People choose to be depressed
- Medications are always needed
- People with mental illness are violent
- People with mental illness cannot hold down a job
- People with mental illness can just “get over it”
- People with mental health can never recover

Facts about Mental Illness

- 90% of depressed individuals do not know they are depressed.
- Treatment may involve medication.
- Treatment may involve psychotherapy.
- Cognitive Behavioral Counseling is one of the best methods to correct distorted thinking and address interpersonal issues.
- Healing requires change in thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.
- Only a small percentage of violent crimes in the U.S. are committed by individuals with serious mental illness.
- We have more treatment strategies than ever before. There is hope for people with mental illnesses.
- Mental illnesses are common and affect a large population of Americans .
- People with mental illnesses are capable of holding down a job.

The mind is regulatory. To regulate or alter it we have to....

1. Monitor it
2. Modify it

Like driving a car!

We have to monitor with our eyes and ears open about where we are going and how fast we will get there.

We can teach ourselves and our clients to monitor what is going on in our life, our reactions, behavior, thoughts, etc. Then we can modify and change how we function, which ultimately changes the structure of the brain.



Dr. Dan Siegel, MD

Clinical Professor of psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine where he is on faculty of the Center for Culture, Brain, and Development.

The founding co-director of the Mindful Awareness Research Center.

The Executive Director of the Mindsight Institute.

How do we serve the mentally ill and the public effectively and ensure that our bias does not get in the way?



“Once you know yourself and understand your biases, then you can consciously navigate your bias to make decisions that are more accurate and correct for the person.”

- Honorable Judge John Baxter, SLC Justice Court

To effectively serve the mentally ill and the public, and to ensure that our bias does not get in the way, here are a few suggestions:

- Become conscious of what our biases are by pondering about how we think and feel and where our biases came from
- Confide in a trusted person about what our feelings and biases are
- Talk to knowledgeable people about what accurate belief or expectations are
- Modify our inaccurate biases and behaviors by
 - Be conscious of when our biases are affecting us
 - Make a conscious choice about choosing accurate beliefs
 - Make conscious decisions based on accurate information