

# Defining Key Concepts

**Purpose:** Define and discuss the concepts of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination.

## ADVISOR NOTES:


### 1. Examining Stereotyping in Activities 42–45

Activities 42–45 work well together, so, if possible, try to use them in consecutive advisory meetings to help your advisees consider how assumptions can lead to stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination.

### 2. Familiarize Yourself with the Concept Maps Teaching Strategy

Before the advisory meeting, take some time to read the **Concept Maps** teaching strategy, which you can find at [facinghistory.org/advisory-media](https://facinghistory.org/advisory-media). While this activity calls for pairs or groups of three to create their maps together, you can also make it an individual activity. After advisees have generated their ideas in their journals, consider having them sort, connect, and elaborate on white paper, using markers or colored pens (if available) to help show relationships between ideas and label their maps.

**APPROXIMATE TIME:**  
40 minutes

**MATERIALS:**  
 **HANDOUT**  
Defining Stereotype,  
Prejudice, and  
Discrimination

## PROCEDURE:

### 1. Create a Stereotype Concept Map

- Start by asking advisees to recall what they discussed about assumptions and labeling in the last meeting when they analyzed the “Street Calculus” cartoon. Then tell them that today they will be expanding on their discussion to include the idea of stereotyping.
- Explain the **Concept Maps** strategy to the group, and then have advisees work in pairs or triads to create concept maps for “stereotype.” Alternatively, you might make a “stereotype” **graffiti board** if you think it will work better for your group. Visit [facinghistory.org/advisory-media](https://facinghistory.org/advisory-media) to learn about these two teaching strategies.
- Have the pairs and triads combine into small groups of four to six to share their concept maps, and then ask the groups to discuss what they think the difference is between the concepts of stereotype, prejudice, and discrimination. Debrief as a whole group, recording their ideas on the board.

## 2. Learn the Definitions of Stereotype, Prejudice, and Discrimination

- Come back together in a circle. Then pass out the handout **Defining Stereotype, Prejudice, and Discrimination** and read it aloud as a whole group.
- After answering any clarifying questions, divide the advisory into small groups to examine the ways in which the three concepts are similar and different. Have them record their ideas on the modified Venn diagram on the back side of the handout and then discuss the questions under the diagram.

## 3. Reflect on New Understanding

- Bring the group together and debrief the reading by creating a large Venn diagram on the board. Have advisees share their ideas and then discuss the following questions as a group:
  - What is one idea from this reading that you think is most important for people to understand? What makes you say that?
  - What questions do you have about the definitions or relationship between stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination?
- Time allowing, invite your advisees to revisit their stereotype concept maps, adding any new ideas, connections, or questions.
- Use the “fist to five” routine to check the group’s understanding of the distinction between stereotype, prejudice, and discrimination (see **Opening Routines for Advisory Meetings** on page 12).



# Defining Stereotype, Prejudice, and Discrimination

**Directions:** Read the following two paragraphs and then use information from this reading, other advisory readings, videos, images, discussions, and your own experiences to complete the Venn diagram on the second page of the handout.

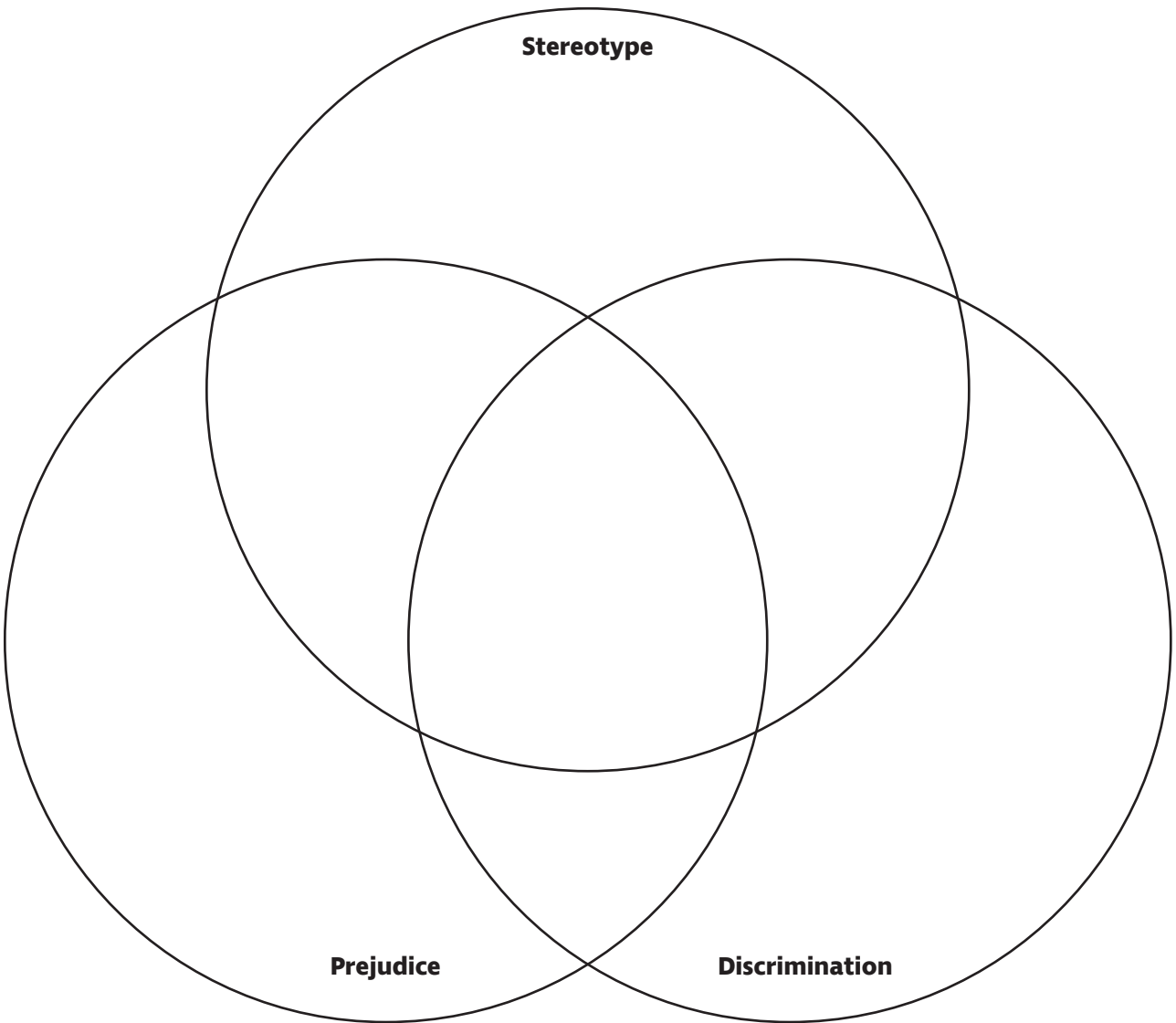
Psychologist Deborah Tannen writes:

We all know we are unique individuals, but we tend to see others as representatives of groups. It's a natural tendency, since we must see the world in patterns in order to make sense of it; we wouldn't be able to deal with the daily onslaught of people and objects if we couldn't predict a lot about them and feel that we know who and what they are. But this natural and useful ability to see patterns of similarity has unfortunate consequences. It is offensive to reduce an individual to a category, and it is also misleading.<sup>1</sup>

A *stereotype* is a belief about an individual based on the real or imagined characteristics of a group to which that individual belongs. Stereotypes can lead us to judge an individual or group negatively. Even stereotypes that seem to portray a group positively reduce individuals to categories and tell an inaccurate "single story." *Prejudice* occurs when we form an opinion about an individual or a group based on a negative stereotype; the word *prejudice* comes from the word *pre-judge*. When a prejudice leads us to treat an individual or group negatively, *discrimination* occurs.

<sup>1</sup> Deborah Tannen, *You Just Don't Understand: Men and Women in Conversation* (New York: Morrow, 1990), 16.

**Discuss the questions and record your ideas in the Venn diagram.**



1. What are the key differences between stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination?
2. In what ways are the three concepts similar?
3. What is one idea from this reading that you think is most important for people to understand? What makes you say that?
4. What questions do you have about the definitions or relationship between stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination?