BASW England

The professional association for social work and social workers



SHADES of BIAS

Reflective case study template

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Wayne Reid
Professional Officer & Social Worker
BASW England
wayne.reid@basw.co.uk

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My Social Work background

- **Professional Officer & Social Worker** *(BASW)*
- **Anti-racism Visionary** *(BASW - secondment)*
- **Supervising Social Worker** *(private fostering Social Work)*
- **Young Person's Advisor** *(supporting care leavers)*
- **Duty & Assessment Officer** *(child protection)*
- **Adult Mental Health Officer** *(community support / intervention)*
- **Youth Offending Service Officer** *(court work & community intervention)*
- **Probation Services Officer** *(intensive supervision & surveillance)*
- **Placements Officer** *(private fostering administration)*



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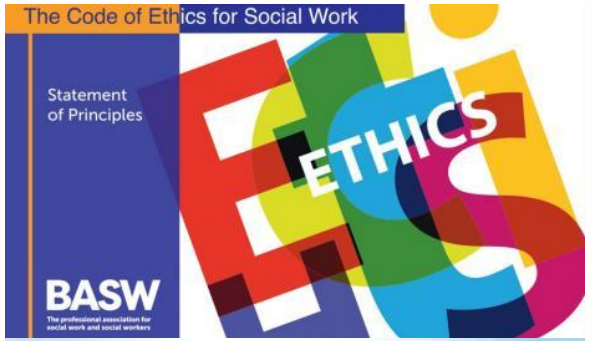


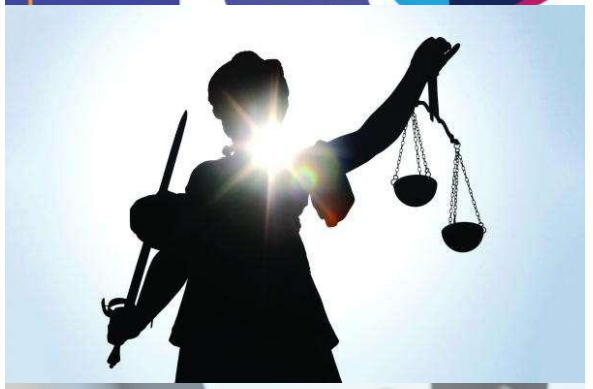
The British Association of Social Workers (BASW)

- BASW is the professional association for Social Workers in the UK (established in 1970).
- We are a member-led organisation which promotes Social Work, the interests of those working within the profession and people who use services.
- We have over 22,000 members and we have teams in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- We are the strong independent voice of Social Work and Social Workers.

BASW England workstreams

- Code of Ethics for Social Work
- The Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF)
- Collaboration with employers, education providers, service-user groups and other stakeholders
- Specialist national thematic groups (children & families; adults; mental health; criminal justice; students and NQSW's and professional development)
- An established network of BASW branches nationwide
- Events, conferences & webinars
- Policy & research activities
- Liaison with the regulator Social Work England







BASW quick weblinks

- Promo video
- Membership types are listed here
- BASW events webpage
- Join BASW online here

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- Parliamentary work with MP's and civil servants
- Training, CPD and career development
- Social Workers' Union (trade union advice and representation)
- National consultation responses, campaigns and lobbying activities
- Black & Ethnic Minority Professionals Symposium (BPS)
- Raising the profile of Social Work on various media platforms (TV, radio, print, online etc)
- Promote 'collective professional identity'



What to expect

SHADES of BIAS

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- What is Shades of Bias (SoB)?
- Who can use SoB?
- What are the origins of SoB?
- How can SoB be utilised more widely?
- The section for people responsible for the bias: *accountability, growth & self-reflection*
- Summary & infographics
- Relevant BASW England workstreams, frameworks and resources
- Questions

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SHADES of BIAS

Reflective case study template



What is Shades of Bias (SoB)?

Shades of Bias (SoB) is a versatile case study template designed to enable critical reflection on how discrimination, oppression and racism manifests in social work and beyond. It is a simple process for documenting, analysing and addressing instances of bias, whether it is experienced directly, observed or perpetrated (by the person/people responsible). SoB embraces intersectionality and is underpinned by the protected characteristics (age, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion etc) of the author (as per the Equality Act 2010). The template also captures more nuanced and multi-layered discrimination such as: classism, microaggressions, neurodiversity, sexism etc. Based on anti-discriminatory, anti-oppressive and anti-racist values and ethics, SoB helps to create a culture of accountability, inclusion, self-expression and systemic change.

SoB is more than just a tool for documenting racism. It is a multidimensional framework for healing, self-examination and transformation across policy, practice and education. SoB provides cathartic and therapeutic benefits, which empowers people to analyse and respond to experiences of bias and various forms of discrimination. By validating lived experiences, SoB is both a self-help resource and practical tool, giving it unique emotional and strategic functions aimed at hearts and minds. It is intended for SoB to become *the* standardised framework for documenting discrimination and exposing harmful systemic patterns that are often ignored.

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bias

noun

UK /ˈbaɪ.əs/ US /ˈbaɪ.əs/

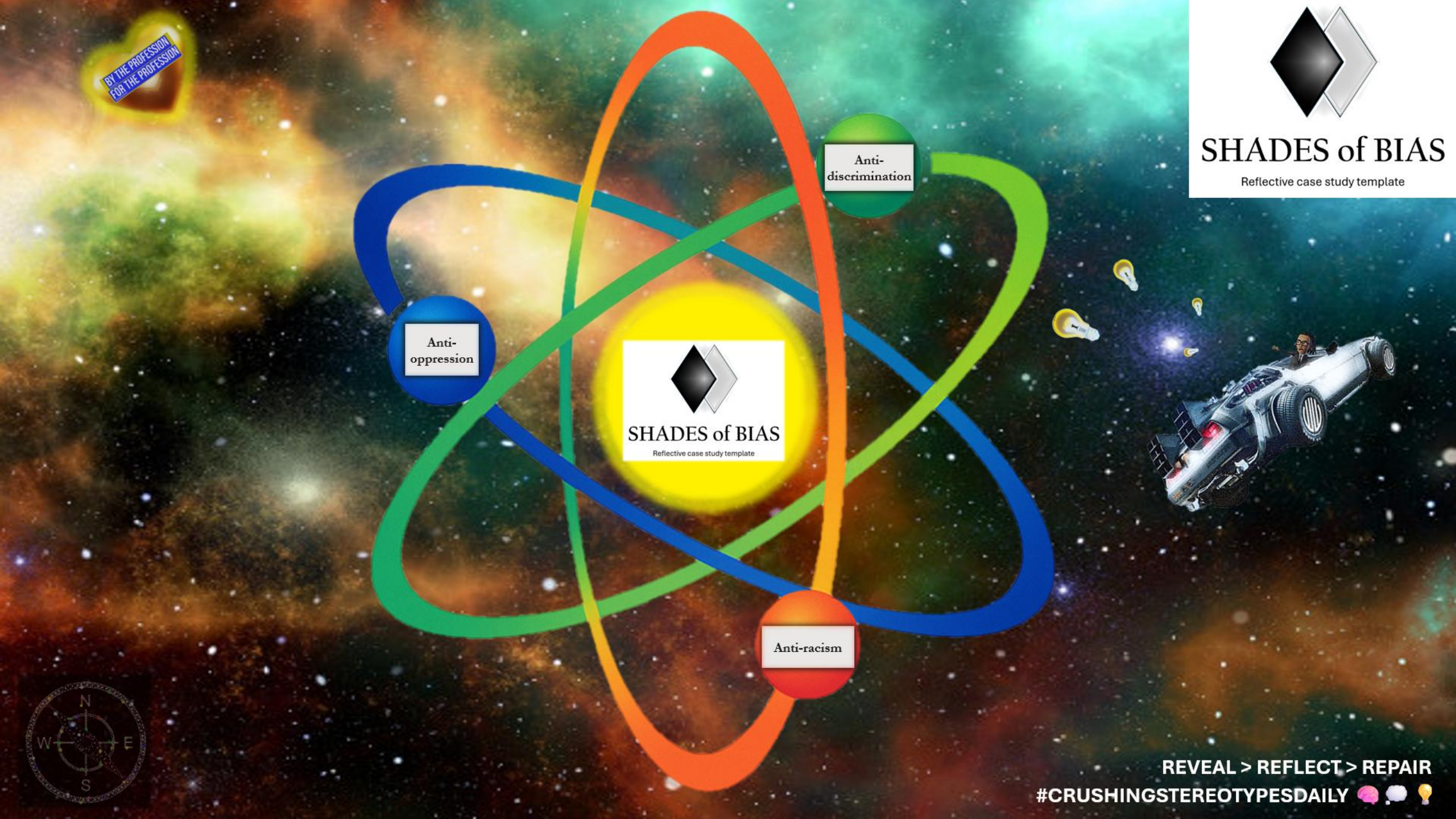
bias *noun* **(PREFERENCE)**

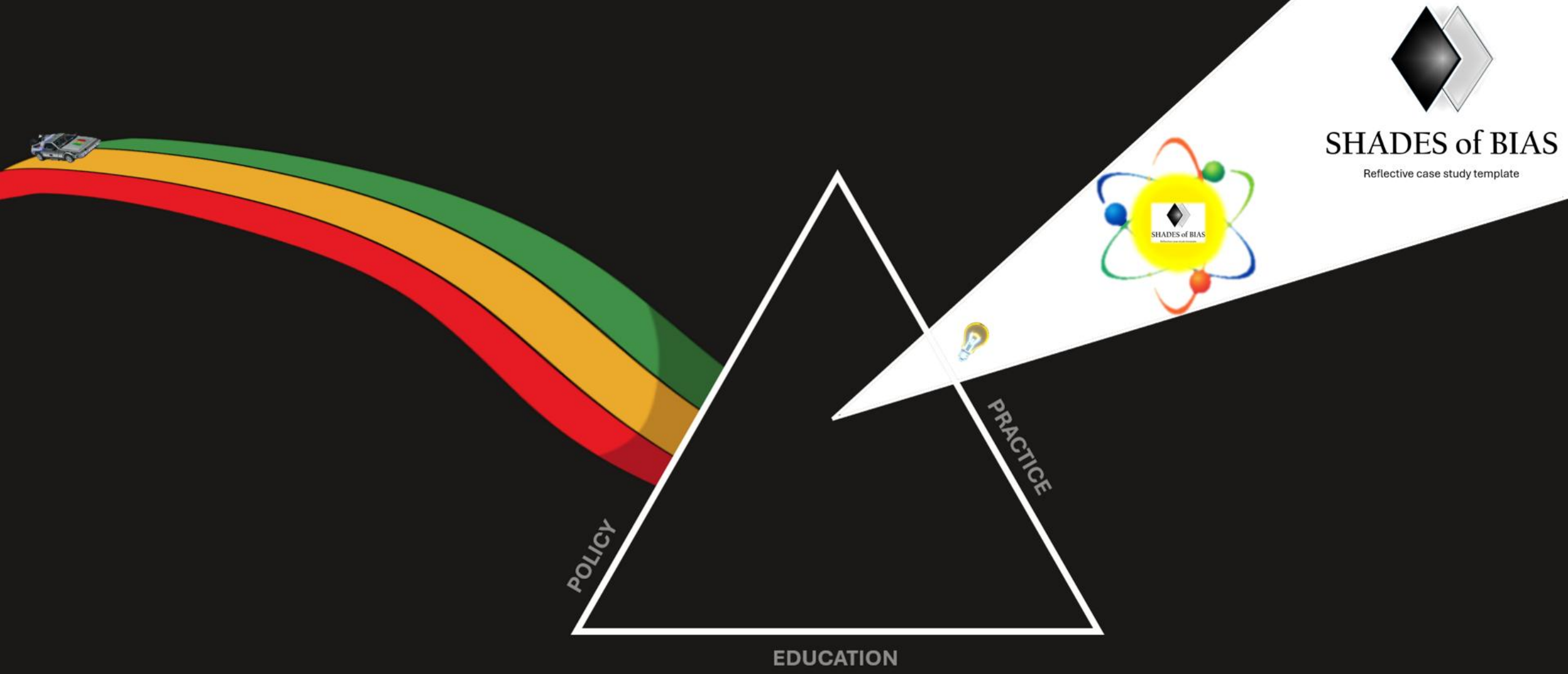
Add to word list

C2 [C usually singular, U]

the action of supporting or opposing a particular person or thing in an unfair way, because of allowing personal opinions to influence your judgment:

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BY THE PROFESSION
FOR THE PROFESSION
Anti-discrimination
Anti-oppression
SHADES of BIAS
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Anti-racism
SHADES of BIAS
Reflective case study template
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VICTIMS/SURVIVORS

SoB serves 3 different groups:

A. Victims/survivors of discrimination/oppression/racism: *Cathartic and therapeutic*

For people who have experienced discrimination/oppression/racism, SoB offers a way to process and validate their experiences - reducing the fear of dismissal or gaslighting. Writing about these incidents can help release emotional distress, allowing people to articulate their feelings in a constructive way. It helps victims/survivors make sense of what happened, recognise patterns of discrimination and regain a sense of control over the narrative. By documenting their experiences, individuals can create a tangible record of injustice, which can be used to seek accountability, support and/or systemic change. This approach reduces isolation, as individuals see their experiences reflected in broader structural patterns, rather than as personal failures or isolated incidents.

It is imperative that victims/survivors of discrimination/oppression/racism access appropriate wellbeing **networks** (such as BASW England's Mentoring Service, Professional Support Service, the Anti-Racist Movement or local peer support groups) and/or relevant **wellbeing resources** (such as: the Relational & Anti-racist supervision template, Eligibility for Advice and Representation Guidance, Professional working conditions & wellbeing campaign, the Black and Ethnic Minority Professionals Symposium (BPS) resources webpage and School of Shabs).

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WITNESSES/ OBSERVERS

B. <u>Witnesses and observers:</u> *Empowering ethical accountability*

People who witness discrimination/oppression/racism often feel uncertain about how to intervene. SoB provides a proactive method to acknowledge and challenge effectively. Witnesses and observers can document incidents without putting themselves at risk, ensuring that discrimination/oppression/racism does not go unnoticed and/or become normalised. Observers can contribute to a growing body of evidence that reveals patterns of systemic injustice professionally and in wider society. SoB supports active social justice, helping witnesses move from silent and passive observance to meaningful action. For many witnesses, speaking up against discrimination/oppression/racism can be intimidating or professionally risky. SoB provides a safe, structured way to record and report incidents, making systemic change more achievable.

PERSON/ PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE (WHERE APPROPRIATE)

C. <u>Person/people responsible for the bias:</u> *A tool for accountability, critical reflection & growth*

Even well-intentioned people can exhibit bias. SoB provides a logical, non-punitive method for people to reflect on their own actions, inactions and biases. People responsible for the bias are encouraged to analyse their decision-making and behaviours, recognising how instinctive and impulsive biases can influence professional judgment. By completing the template from their own perspective, people can confront how and why they perpetuated discrimination/oppression/racism and commit to learning and change. This process aims to convert guilt into being responsible and shame into taking accountability - cultivating a culture of growth rather than defensiveness. This approach helps to shift from a blame culture to a learning culture, where people actively deconstruct bias and commit to authentic and holistic social justice.

For anyone & everyone.

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VICTIMS/SURVIVORS

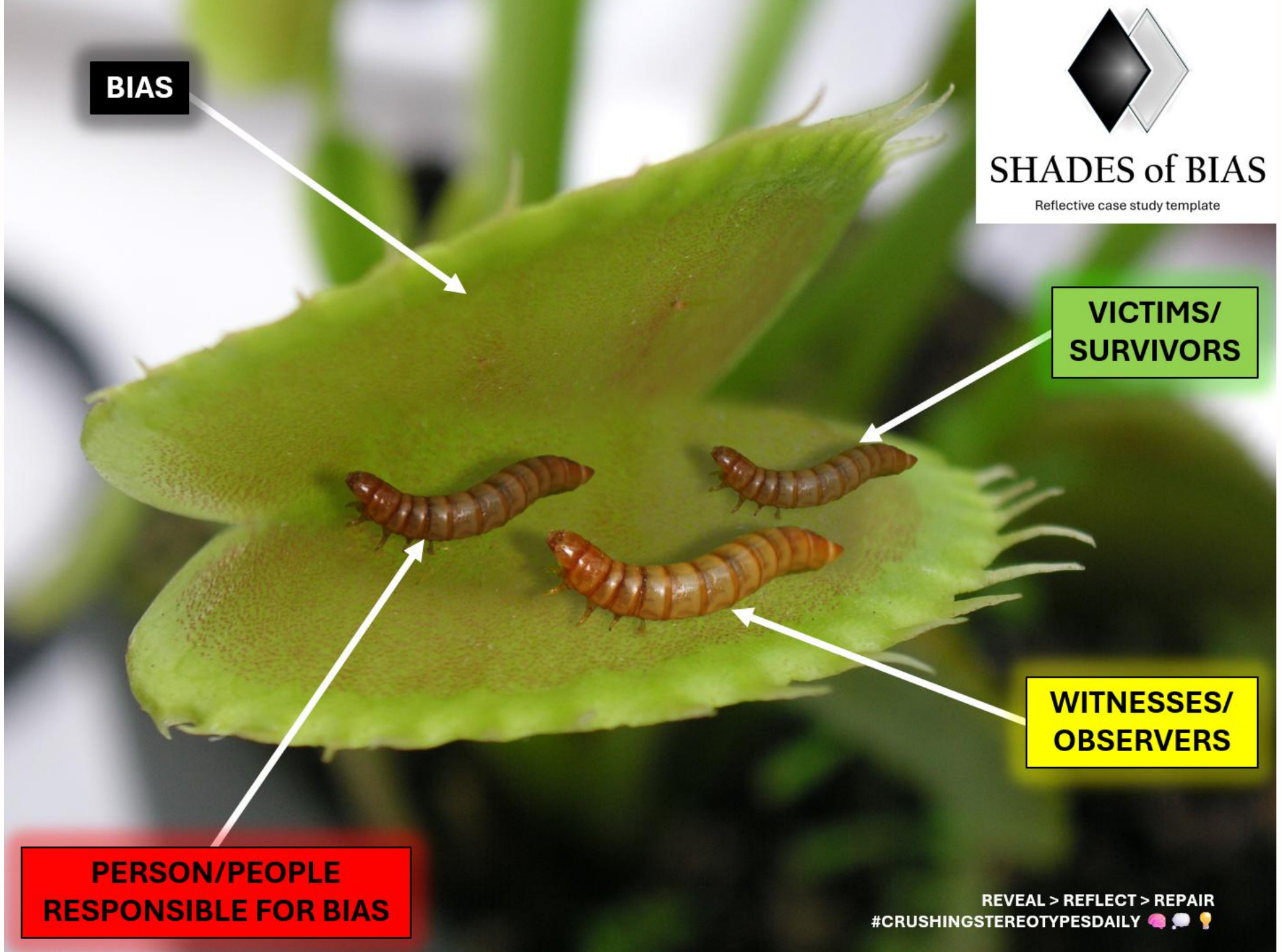


WITNESSES/ OBSERVERS



PERSON/PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE (WHERE APPROPRIATE)

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BIAS
SHADES of BIAS
Reflective case study template
VICTIMS/
SURVIVORS
WITNESSES/
OBSERVERS
PERSON/PEOPLE
RESPONSIBLE FOR BIAS
REVEAL > REFLECT > REPAIR
#CRUSHINGSTEREOTYPESDAILY


C’mon - I mean, you know that was just banter – don’t you?
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Reflective case study template
SHADES of BIAS
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SoB has the following self-explanatory sections:

1. Case study title

A brief descriptive title

2. Background and context

Whose perspective is this case study written from?

Date of the incident (approximate or exact)

Location. For example: workplace, university, professional event, online etc

Setting. For example: team meeting, supervision, face-to-face interaction, training session etc

People involved. For example: anonymised service-user/ lived experience/ expert by experience, manager, colleague etc)

Relevant policies/ protocols. For example: anti-racism policy, EDI framework, complaints process etc)

What prior experiences or organisational culture may have influenced the incident?

Were there any signs or indicators that the incident might occur? If so, what were they?

3. Nature of the incident

Describe the incident as clearly and factually as possible

Was the racism covert (microaggressions, exclusion, unconscious bias) or overt (racial slurs, harassment, direct discrimination)?

Was the racism internalised, interpersonal, institutional, medical and/ or structural?

Were any other forms of discrimination/ oppression present from an intersectionality perspective?

What was the immediate impact on you or others involved?

How did the incident affect the dynamics within the team or organisation?

Were there any specific phrases or actions that stood out as particularly harmful or impactful?

How did the incident reflect broader societal issues related to race, discrimination and oppression?

What emotions did you and others involved feel before/ during/ after the incident?

How did the incident affect your professional relationships?

Did you notice any changes in team morale or cohesion following the incident?

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4. How was the situation handled?

Who responded to the incident (if anyone)?

What action(s) were taken at the time? For example: reported to HR, challenged informally, ignored, escalated, etc.

Did the organisational policies/processes support an adequate and fair response?

Was trade union advice and/or representation provided?

What was the final outcome? For example: no action, disciplinary response, mediation, etc.

Were there any barriers that prevented a more effective response to the incident?

If you could change one aspect of how the situation was handled, what would it be and why?

5. Reflection and learning

What could have been handled differently? For example: by you, colleagues, others involved or the organisation)

How did this incident affect your professional confidence, mental health, or sense of belonging in the workplace?

Has there been any follow-up action or commitment to change? If so, what?

What structural/systemic issues contributed to this incident?

Has the organisation taken any long-term corrective actions since the incident?

Is there a timeline/deadline for implementation, investigation, resolutions and/or review?

Key takeaways or recommendations for BASW

What personal biases or assumptions did this incident reveal in yourself or others?

Could your own practice be adjusted to avoid similar incidents in the future?

What role does self-care play in your response to incidents of racism, and how can it be prioritised?

Was there any resources or specific support that was helpful to you?

What advice would you give to someone encountering a similar situation in future?

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6. Reflection and learning (for the person/people responsible for bias)

What was your initial rationale, justification or motivation for your action/inaction?
How has this incident changed your approach to discrimination, racism and oppression?
How do you think your actions were perceived by the victim(s) and others involved?
Have you since recognised any unintended consequences of your actions?
What steps will you take to repair harm and/or prevent future incidents?
Is there a timeline/deadline for implementation, investigation, resolutions and/or review?
Were your actions shaped by wider workplace culture, policies, or expectations? If so, how?
Are there systemic or structural factors that may have enabled your behaviour?"
What have you learned from reflecting on this incident?
What concrete steps will you take to change your approach to discrimination, racism and oppression moving forward?

7. Other comments or reflections

SoB is a practical, structured and reflective tool that empowers and equips people. Unlike many reports that merely outline problems or recommend solutions that are not implemented, SoB is a universal template to document, analyse and support people in real-world scenarios.

If social workers (victims/survivors/witnesses/people responsible) would like to share their completed case study with BASW England for collation and potential (anonymous) publication in the future, they can send completed submissions to wayne.reid@basw.co.uk or keep it private for personal use.

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PURPOSE

Document and reflect on experiences of discrimination, oppression and racism related to the Equality Act 2010

PEOPLE

Victims/survivors – cathartic and therapeutic benefits

Witnesses – acknowledge and challenge discrimination

People responsible for bias – critical reflection and learning

PROCESS

- Case study title
- Background and context
- Nature of the incident
- How was the situation handled?
- Reflection and learning
- Reflection and learning (for the person/people responsible for bias)

PROVISION

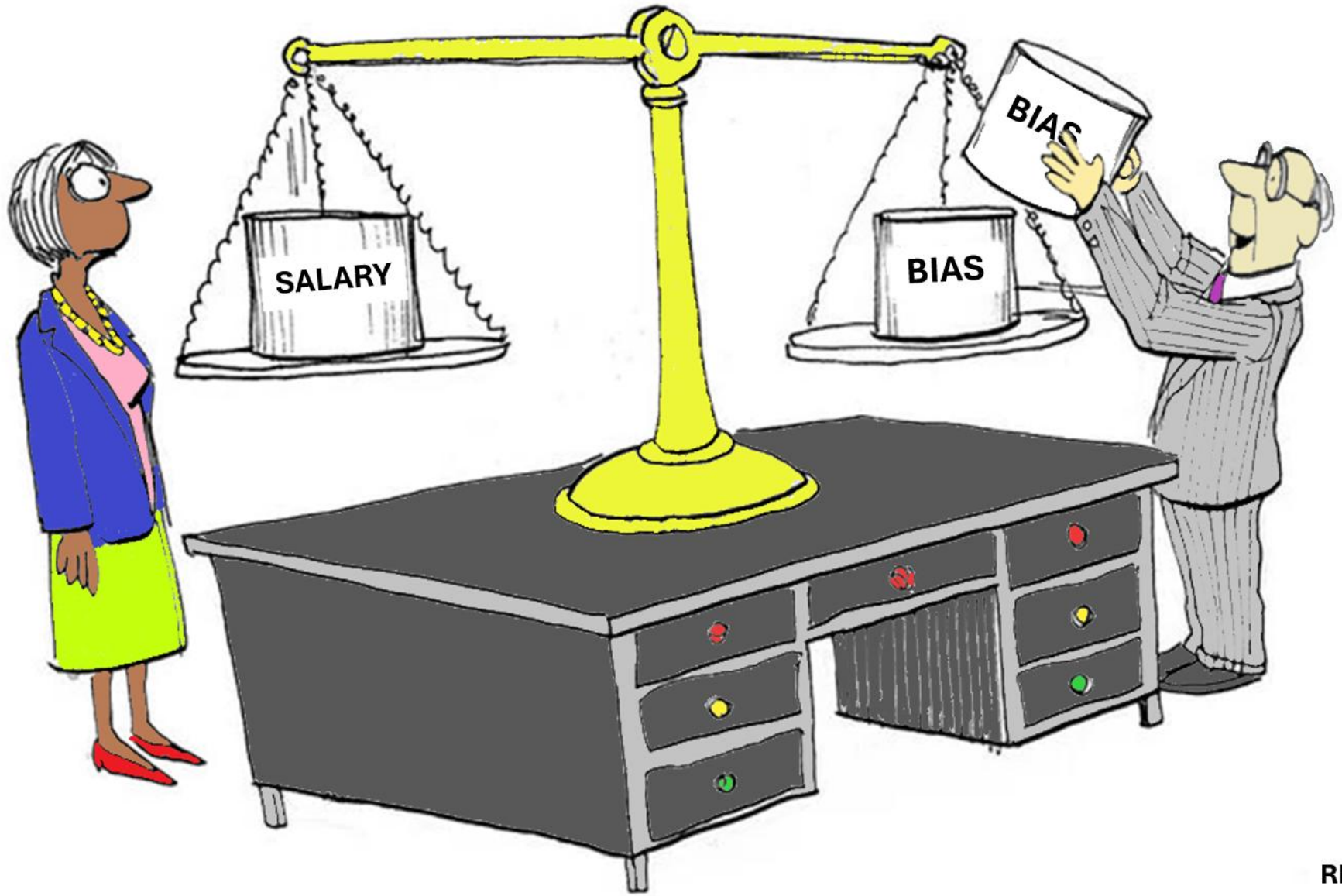
Policy, practice and education

Supports anti-discriminatory, anti-oppressive and anti-racist approaches

Encourages systemic accountability

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BIAS

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What are the origins of SoB?

The Shades of Bias (SoB) case study template was developed by Wayne Reid (BASW England Professional and Social Worker), the Black and Ethnic Minority Professionals Symposium (BPS), Professional Capabilities and Development (PC & D) group, Anti Racist Movement (A.R.M) and School of Shabs following concerns raised by Black and Global Majority BASW England members including:

- Practice Educators - who reported racism with students and organisational practices
- Students - who reported racism in social work placements and academic settings
- Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWs) - who encountered racism in recruitment, everyday practice, career progression and workplace cultures

These concerns were escalated through BASW (British Association of Social Workers) and representations made to key stakeholders and partners, highlighting systemic racism in social work education, early career pathways and relevant regulatory frameworks.

The development of SoB coincided with the publication of The Child Safeguarding Review Panel "It's Silent": Race, racism and safeguarding children report, which highlighted a lack of accountability in addressing racism in safeguarding practices.

SoB is informed by BASW's Code of Ethics, Social Work England's professional standards and the Social Care Workforce Race and Equality Standards (SC WRES).

SoB is a logical progression from the 'Anti-racism in Social Work' activities across the UK (between 27/05/20 – 26/09/21) report.

The lack of tangible reforms on 'Anti-racism in Social Work' underscores the need for a practitioner-led tool that empowers individuals to document and challenge all forms of discrimination in all settings – hence the conceptualisation of the template. SoB is part of wider "hearts and minds" campaign to promote social justice in Social Work.

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How can SoB be utilised more widely in policy, practice & education?

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Students
Studies
Placements
Supervision
Peer learning / group work
Continuous professional development
Support for complaints & disciplinary contexts
Wellbeing, emotional processing & ethical integrity

Practitioners
Direct practice
Team meetings
Supervision
Support for complaints & disciplinary contexts
Peer learning / Group work
Continuous professional development
Organisational influence
Wellbeing, emotional processing & ethical integrity

Managers
Team leadership
Supervision & staff support
Promotion of inclusive culture
Support for complaints & disciplinary contexts
Continuous professional development
Recruitment & retention
Multi-agency working
Wellbeing, emotional processing & ethical integrity

Heads of Service
Strategic leadership
Workforce oversight
Supervision & senior management meetings
Support for complaints & disciplinary contexts
Promotion of inclusive culture
Recruitment & progression
Multi-agency & political engagement
Continuous professional development
Wellbeing, emotional processing & ethical integrity

Academics
Teaching & curriculum design
Student supervision & support
Research
Continuous professional development
Support for complaints & disciplinary contexts
Institutional life
Sector influence
Wellbeing, emotional processing & ethical integrity

Training & Workforce development
Improved educational and learning practices
Support for learning and development
Continuous professional development
Confidence in addressing bias
Safe environment for reflection (and confidentiality if needed)
Support for complaints and disciplinary contexts
Promotion of inclusive culture
Wellbeing, emotional processing & ethical integrity

Policy development
Policy analysis
Strategic decision-making
Supervision & team reflection
Stakeholder engagement
Continuous professional development
Organisational & sector influence
Wellbeing, emotional processing & ethical integrity

Personal use
Personal reflection & enhanced self-awareness
Witness / observer insights
Person responsible for bias insights
Navigating complaints
Navigating disciplinary proceedings
Intersectional analysis
Confidentiality & safety
Wellbeing, emotional processing & ethical integrity

“THE INESCAPABLE ALL-SEEING EYE”



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AGE

DISABILITY

RACE

RELIGION

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST!

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whataboutery

/ˌwɒtəˈbaʊtəri/

noun

1. the technique or practice of responding to an accusation or difficult question by making a counter-accusation or raising a different issue.

British

"all too often, well-intentioned debate descends into whataboutery"

*Meaning of **wokery** in English*

wokery

noun [U] informal disapproving

UK /ˈwəʊ.kᵊr.i/ US /ˈwoʊ.kɚ.i/

(also **wokeism**)

Add to word list

a way of referring to the acts and opinions of people who are especially aware of social problems such as racism and inequality, used by people who think these acts and opinions have gone too far:

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The section for people responsible for the bias:

accountability, growth & self-reflection

PERSON/ PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE (WHERE APPROPRIATE)

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This section in the Shades of Bias (SoB) case study template supports individuals who have engaged in biased, discriminatory or oppressive actions/behaviours whether knowingly or unwittingly. It has a structured, non-punitive approach to reflection, helping individuals take responsibility, learn and commit to anti-discriminatory, anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice.

Why engage?

- To recognise and understand personal biases
- To acknowledge and address the harm caused
- To align with professional ethics and regulatory expectations
- To contribute to a culture of accountability and systemic change

When completing a Shades of Bias case study, people responsible for the bias should focus on:

Understanding your actions

- *What motivated your actions or decisions?*
- *Were any biases, stereotypes or assumptions at play?*
- *Were you aware of the potential impact at the time?*

Impact on others

- *How might your actions have been perceived?*
- *What harm - intentional or not -may have occurred?*
- *How has this affected trust, relationships or the workplace culture?*

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Systemic & organisational influences

- *Were workplace policies, norms or pressures a factor?*
- *Was there a lack of training or awareness contributing to your actions?*
- *What changes could help prevent similar incidents?*

Commitment to change

- *What steps can you take to develop your awareness and practice?*
- *How will you demonstrate accountability and professional growth?*
- *What support (training, mentoring, supervision) could aid your development?*

Reveal, reflect, repair & move forward

- *Have you taken any steps to acknowledge and address the harm caused?*
- *What does meaningful accountability look like in this situation?*
- *How can you contribute to a more inclusive and equitable environment?*

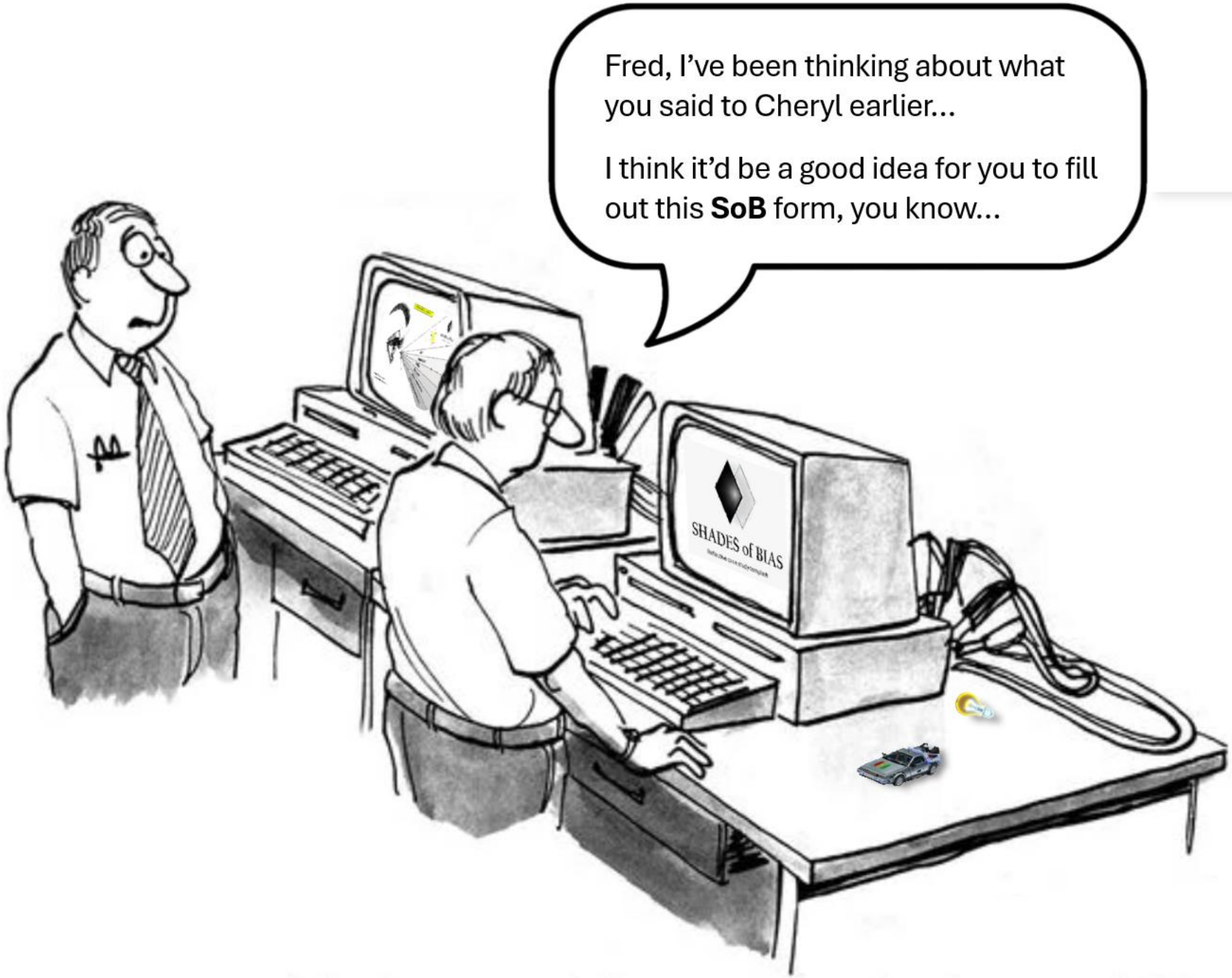
SoB encourages honest self-reflection. This process:

- *Can be completed anonymously to promote openness*
- *Can be supported through professional supervision or group discussion*
- *Should be used as a developmental tool, rather than a tick-box exercise*

By engaging meaningfully, people responsible for bias can move beyond defensiveness to take responsibility and contribute to their personal/professional growth that prioritises justice, equality and ethical practice.

SHADES of BIAS

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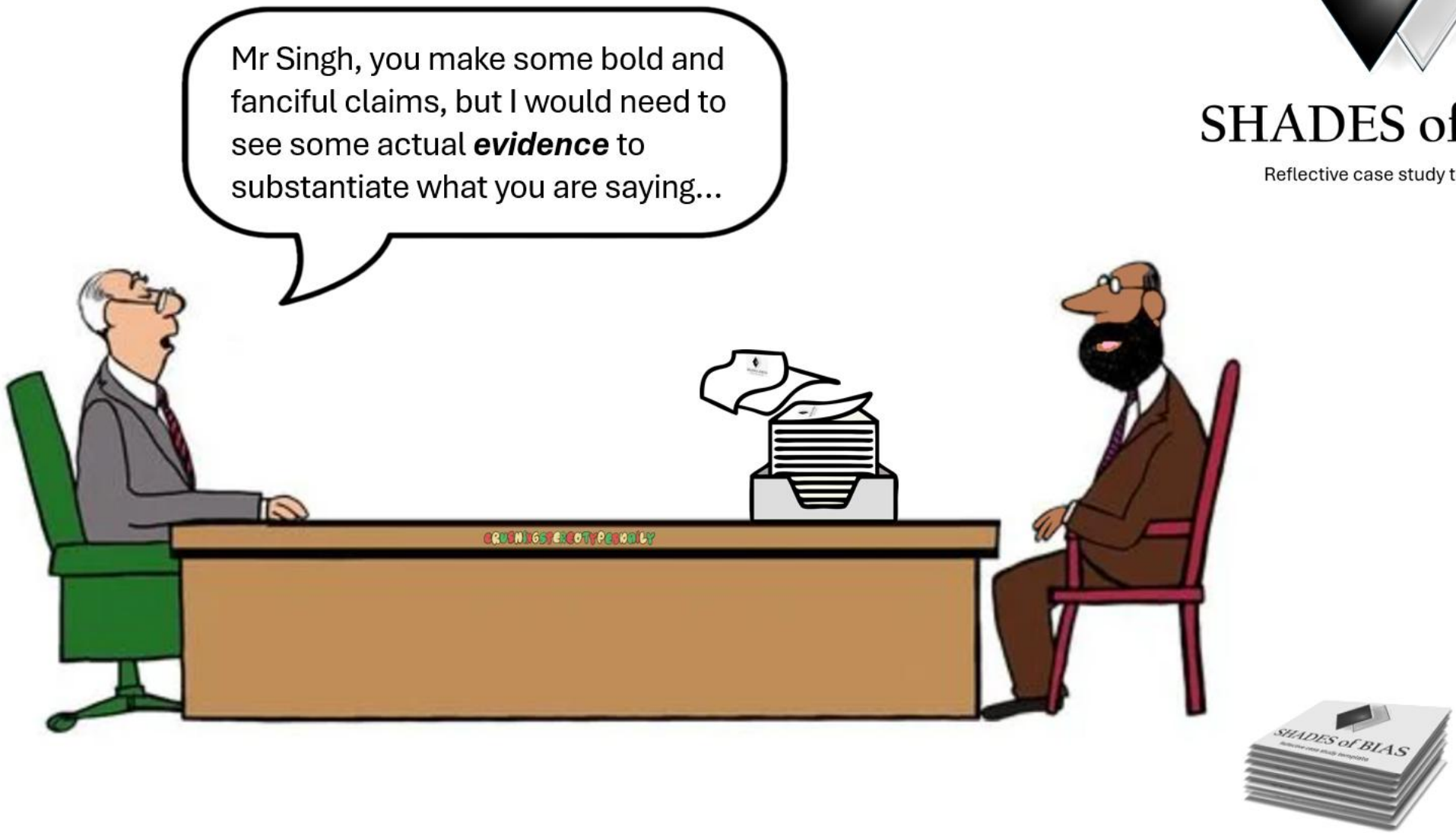


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Summary

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SoB is a reflective framework for humanising people's lived experiences, promoting accountability and growth and informing policy reforms. By embedding SoB in policy, practice and education discussions, we can challenge discrimination, oppression and racism; amplify marginalised voices and create a profession that is truly committed to social justice.

The hope is that SoB becomes conventional and always useable during incidents of social injustice.

Visit the Shades of Bias webpage here: https://basw.co.uk/shades-bias-sob

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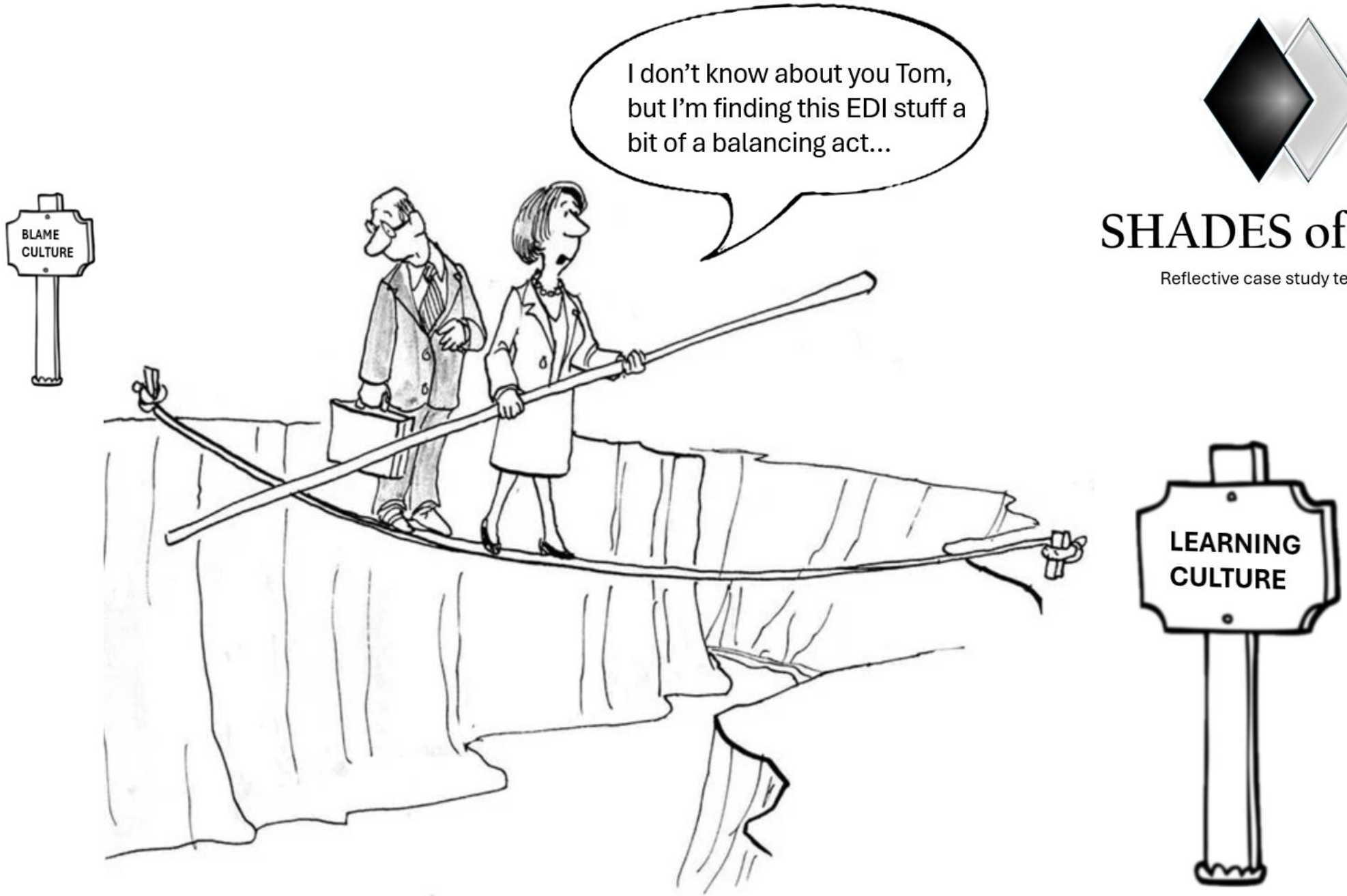


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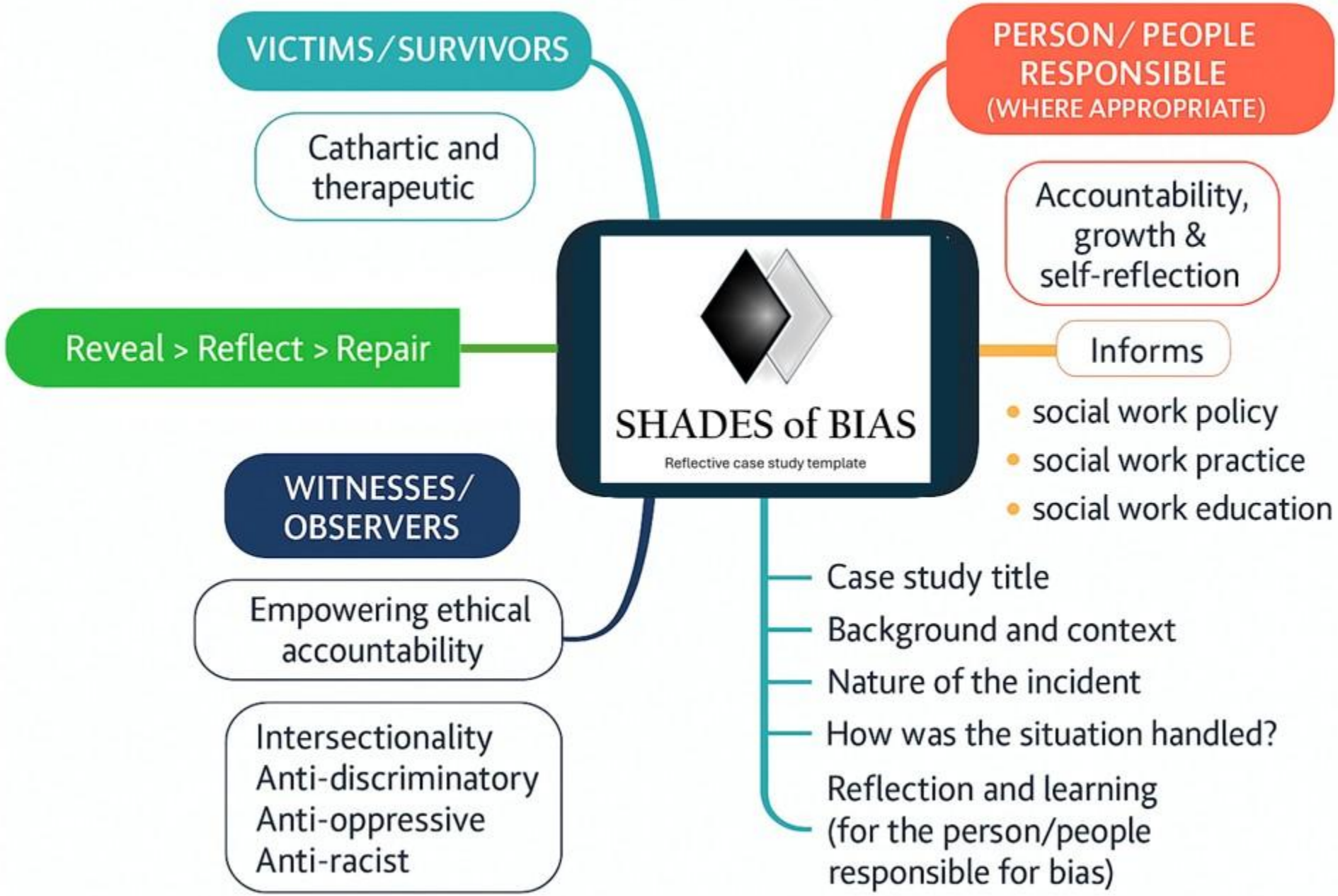
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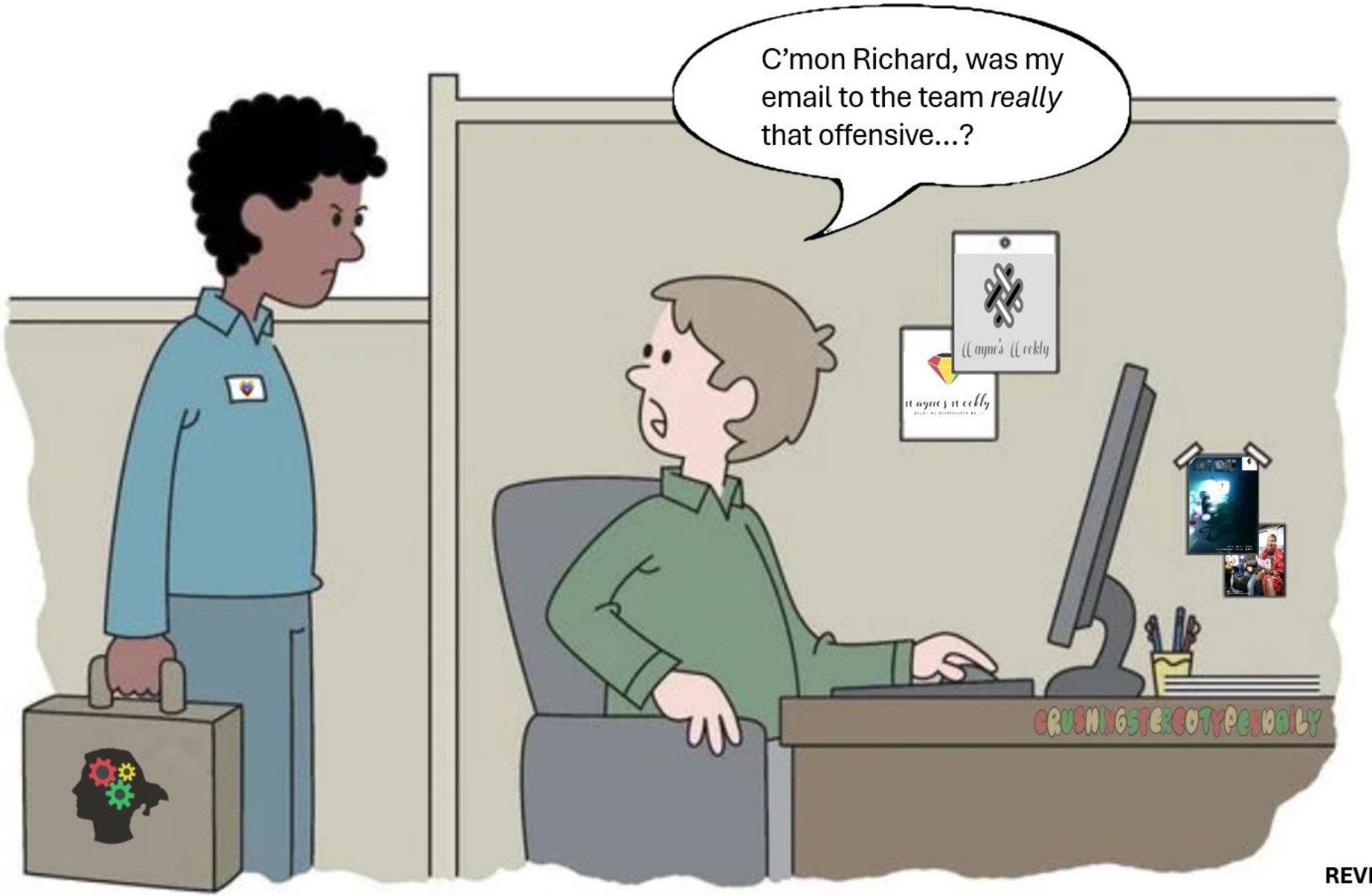
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VICTIMS/SURVIVORS
Cathartic and therapeutic
PERSON/ PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE (WHERE APPROPRIATE)
Accountability, growth & self-reflection
Reveal > Reflect > Repair
SHADES of BIAS
Reflective case study template
Informs
social work policy
social work practice
social work education
WITNESSES/ OBSERVERS
Empowering ethical accountability
Intersectionality
Anti-discriminatory
Anti-oppressive
Anti-racist
Case study title
Background and context
Nature of the incident
How was the situation handled?
Reflection and learning (for the person/people responsible for bias)

SHADES of BIAS

Reflective case study template



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SHADES of BIAS

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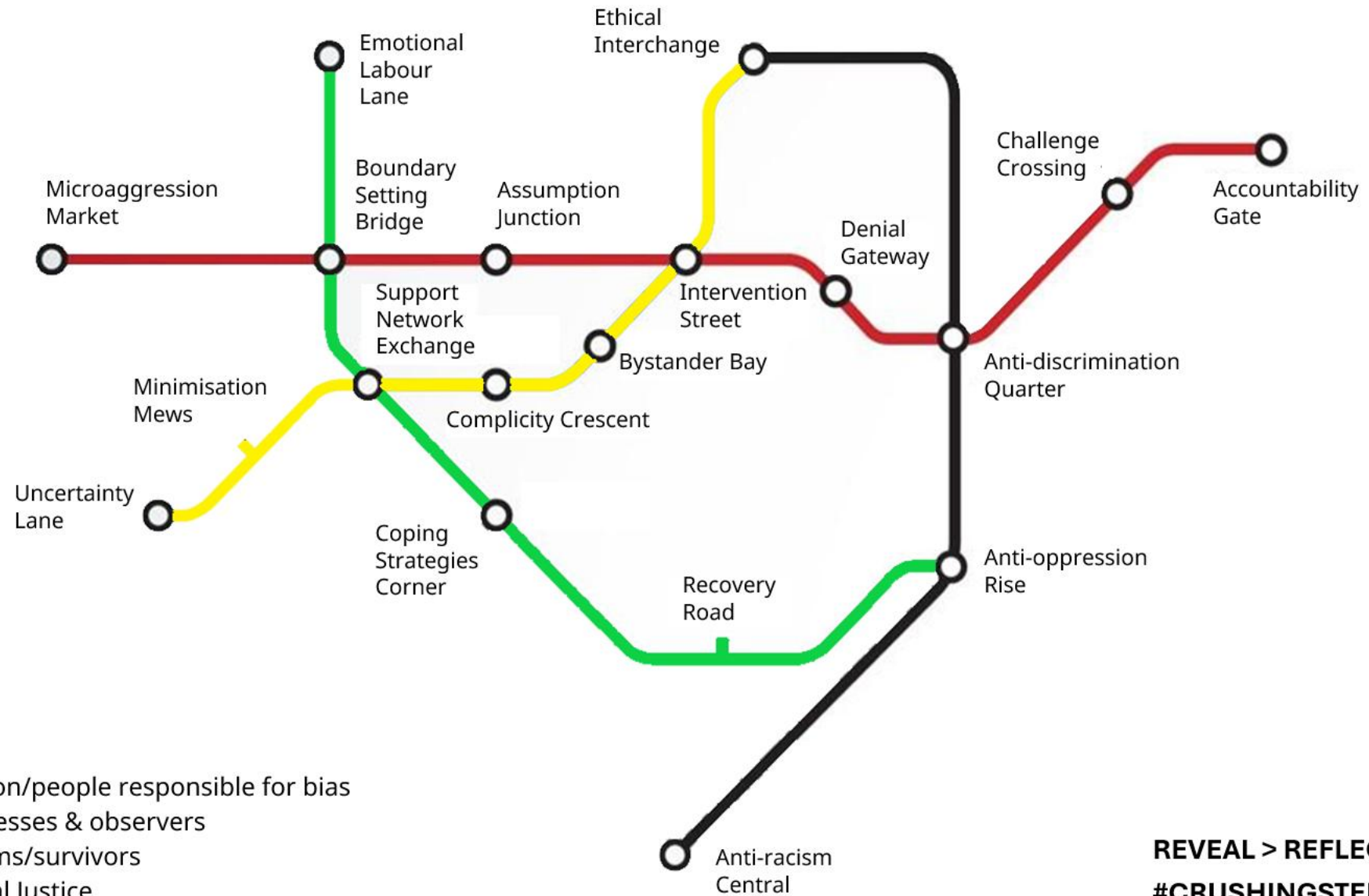
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UNDERGROUND OVERGROUND

A MAP TO REVEAL > REFLECT > REPAIR

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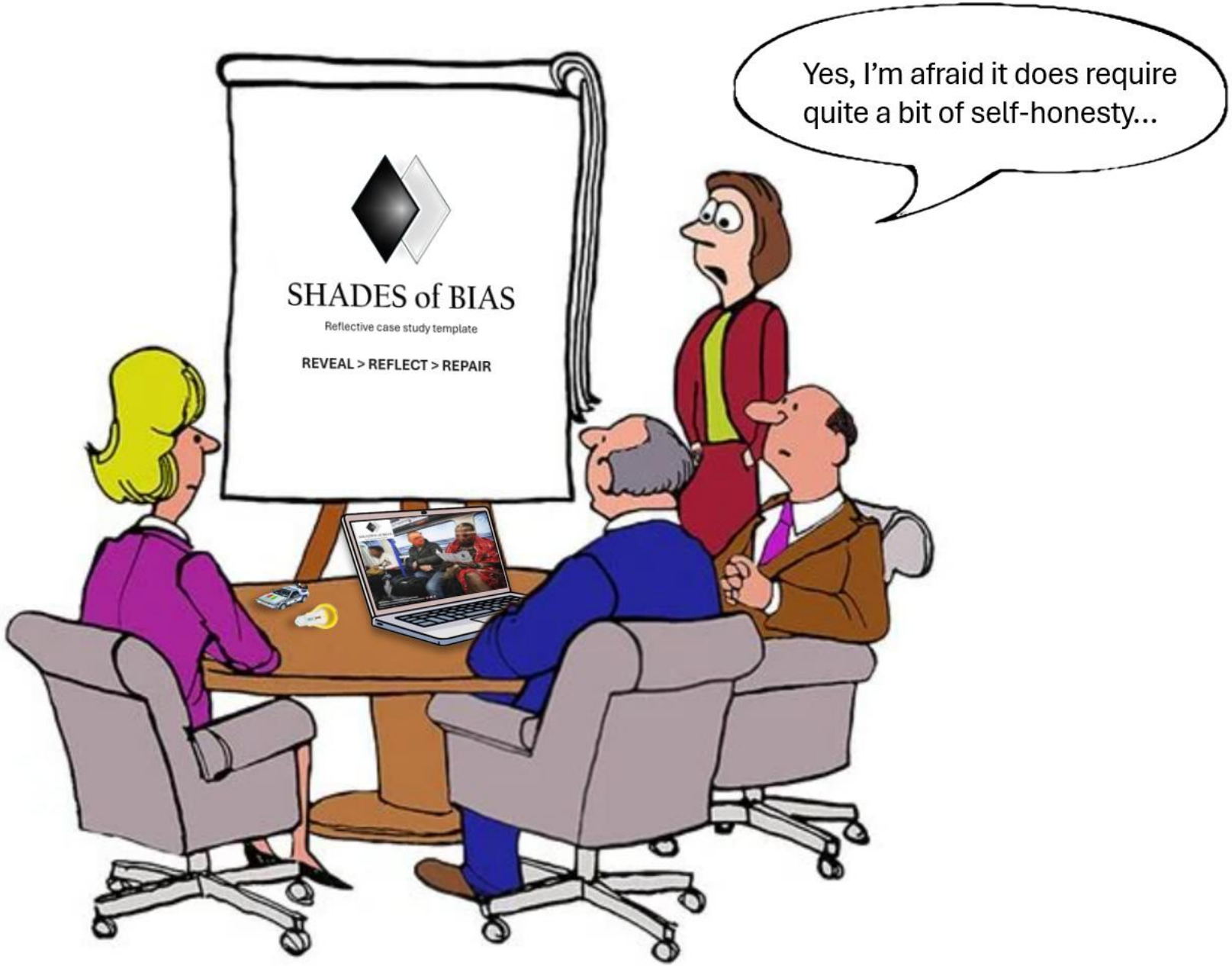


Key to lines

- Person/people responsible for bias
- Witnesses & observers
- Victims/survivors
- Social Justice

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Other relevant BASW England workstreams, frameworks and resources

BASW England

The professional association for social work and social workers







research in practice

Social Work Sorted The Podcast

BPS Black & Ethnic Minority Professionals Symposium

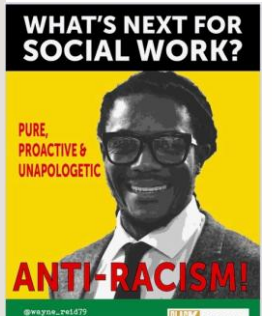
THINK AHEAD

Local Government Association

THE VOICE

Pertemps Social Care

The Guardian







Cafcass Cymru

Royal College of Occupational Therapists

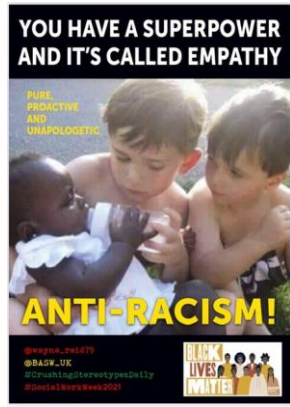
HSC Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

CASCADE

Hertfordshire

TUC Changing the world of work for good





What Works for Children's Social Care

ifsw





Working Class ACADEMICS



The Tavistock and Portman 100 YEARS 1920 to 2020

Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru Care Inspectorate Wales

SYNERGY SESSIONS RECIPROCAL COLLABORATION

IASW Irish Association of Social Workers

skillsforcare

Make it Plain

Frontline

NIROMP National IRO Managers Partnership

NORTH EAST LONDON SOCIAL WORK TEACHING PARTNERSHIP

Making Research Count

CSUN CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY NORTHRIDGE

The Triple 'A' Chinwag

CommunityCare The heart of your social care career



SOCIAL WORK NEWS



UNIVERSITY OF DERBY



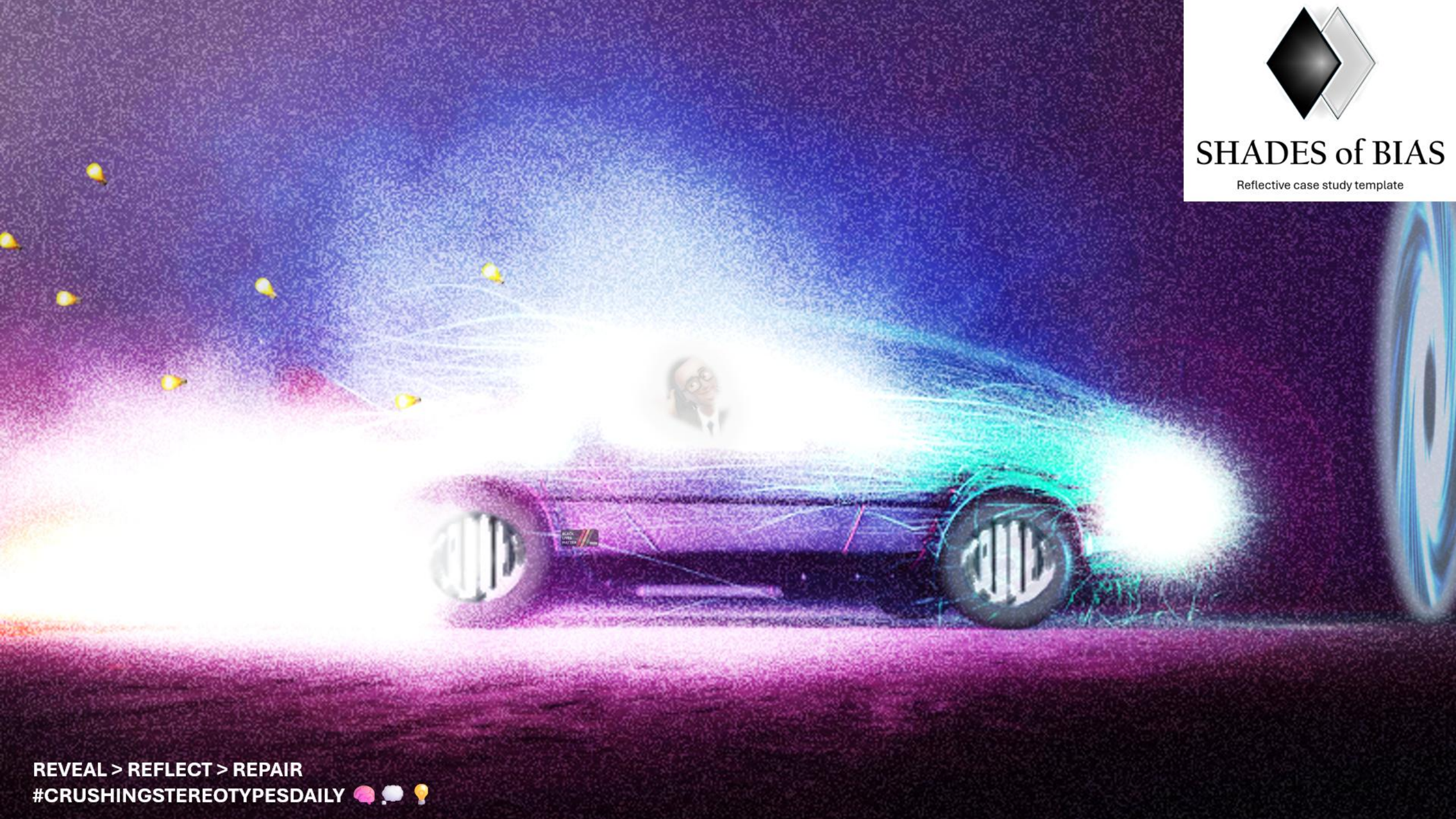








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Thank you. Any questions?

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