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Health & Medicine, Bad Habit



NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Equality and Diversity Unit 1: Exploring Equality and Diversity Session 4: Prejudice and discrimination What does it mean? In a diverse society where each individual may have lots of different characteristics and qualities, there are many opportunities for people to label and stereotype others. When this happens, it can create an environment where prejudice and discrimination may be found. A prejudice is an unfair or unreasonable preconceived view or judgement that is formed without being based on any specific grounds or sufficient knowledge.

Discrimination means treating a person or group differently, often in a negative manner, based upon one or a small number of characteristics. Stereotypes can sometimes be positive – however, this is not the case when it comes to prejudice. With prejudice, the views held about certain groups of people are negative, they are applied to an entire group and they tend to be strongly held. So, the group (with possibly a different gender / race / ethnic origin / sexual orientation or with a disability) will be described in negative ways.

They will be called things such as ‘ lazy’, ‘ stupid’, ‘ weak’, ‘ dangerous’ and ‘ untrustworthy’. In communities and societies where prejudice and discrimination are found, people will have fewer life chances and a poorer quality of life. Given that prejudices can be so damaging, it is worth looking at how people develop them. How people may develop prejudices There are many ways that people may develop prejudices. Two of the most common are: 1. Socialisation The most likely way that people will develop prejudices is to learn them from other people, such as family and friends.

An individual will experience the views of these people on a daily basis, and there will also be the influences of the media and the views of high profile people. If a young person with no alternative points of reference is exposed to prejudices that are stated as facts, then he / she may accept them without any questions. If a particular prejudice is regularly presented, then it is difficult for people to question the viewpoint and challenge the prejudice. 2.

Over generalisation

A second way prejudices may develop occurs when a person has a powerful experience and then generalises it to a particular group. This is usually caused by a very strong negative experience. It may well be very sensible to dislike or distrust the particular experience, but the over generalisation is not always accurate. Different types of discrimination People can describe themselves or others in terms of one or more characteristics. At times, it is possible that a person will be treated in a negative way because of a characteristic or quality that they possess.

This negative treatment is often referred to as discrimination. There are a few key terms that are used when talking about discrimination. These are: • Direct and indirect discrimination • Dual discrimination and multiple discrimination • Positive discrimination • Discrimination arising from disability • Discrimination by association • Protected characteristics. The effects that discrimination and prejudice can have on people When people are subject to discrimination they often end up with a quality of life far lower than they would reasonably expect.

Historically, discrimination and prejudice has sometimes been a matter of life and death in some countries and cultures. Some of the effects of prejudice

and discrimination include:

- People being killed because of their race, nationality, religion or sexual orientation.
- People being denied the right to vote.
- People being subjected to physical attacks and verbal abuse.
- People being deprived of legal rights.
- People being denied education, jobs and opportunities.
- People being generally treated as outsiders and second class citizens.
- People accepting the negative views of themselves.

Communities and whole societies having greater conflict and being less efficient and harmonious.

- Communities and societies built on hatred and contempt.

When people are classified (stereotyped) on the basis of one or two characteristics, they are stripped of many of their qualities. A stereotype reduces them to a one dimensional character. All the other things that make a person special and human will be ignored by the prejudiced people. This makes it easier to inflict pain and suffering on innocent parties. This is why prejudice and discrimination are so dangerous.