



## Generational Othering:

How Popular Stereotypes Impact Our Teaching and a Scientific Way Forward

Summary document of the Webber lecture, presented by Drs. Drs. Joshua Jauregui and Adelaide McClintock on September 13, 2024

### *Rethinking Stereotypes and Adapting Teaching Practices*

When thinking of generational stereotypes, remember that individuals within a given category (e.g., 'millennials') have disparate experiences, and that discourse on generations are often anecdotal and subjective. It is important to recognize how confirmation and life cycle biases can make it difficult to connect and relate with people at different life stages, reinforcing our sense of otherness.

*How can we integrate our core values into our teaching practice in a way that is authentic, connects us to our learners, and maintains flexibility in an ever-evolving world?*

An important way to adapt our teaching to new learners within a changing world is to promote a culture of psychological safety, where one does not experience retaliation for sharing ideas, questions and concerns, or for making mistakes. Psychological safety isn't about removing discomfort, but rather, intentionally creating an environment where there is an absence of fear or retaliation even amidst discomfort and perceived power imbalances.

### *Key Points to Start Building Psychological Safety*

- Write down and reflect on your own teaching philosophy and core values, then deliberately create a culture that supports them. You can help make a learner feel safer and more open to receiving feedback by:
  - Building a relationship with your learners and getting to know them as individuals
  - Communicating your expectations of them in a transparent manner
  - Acknowledging their successes as well as their mistakes
  - Recognizing that stress can amplify or dampen reactions to situations, for learners and preceptors alike
  - Making intentional opportunities to learn from learners and receive feedback on your teaching
- Welcome your learners and encourage them to connect with peers and mentors from all disciplines, where they can learn from each other's diverse experiences
- Support your learners' sense of involvement and belonging by including them where applicable in the functioning of the unit/clinic
- Be aware of how you say things, not just what you say. For example, expressing humility in your delivery of a comment can strengthen your credibility and perceived expertise

### *Further Learning*

- Access the [recording of the session](#), the [session slides](#), and the [teacher appreciation video](#) recorded by learners from across the Faculty of Medicine
- Jauregui J, Watsjold B, Welsh L, Ilgen JS, Robins L. [Generational 'othering': The myth of the Millennial learner](#). Med Educ. 2020;54(1):60-65. doi:10.1111/medu.13795.
- McClintock AH, Kim S, Chung EK. [Bridging the Gap Between Educator and Learner: The Role of Psychological Safety in Medical Education](#). Pediatrics. 2022;149(1):e2021055028. doi:10.1542/peds.2021-055028.

### *Acknowledgements*

Content informed by Drs. Addie H. McClintock and Joshua Jauregui, and notes by the Office of Faculty Development.