



# Association for all?



FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

Tips for Awareness Teams  
by Radio-Verein Leipzig e.V.

*written by*

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# Welcome

We are the Awareness Team of Radio Blau.  
We were founded in 2022 to continue the diversity process in radio that started in 2021.

The Radio Association brings together people with different experiences, skills, backgrounds, demands, habits and needs. Basically, they all just want to make radio, but conflicts always arise.

We are looking for constructive ways to deal with conflicts and want to stand by all those who are seeking support.

This handout is the result of our experiences in our first year as the Awareness Team at Radio Blau.

[www.radioblau.de](http://www.radioblau.de)

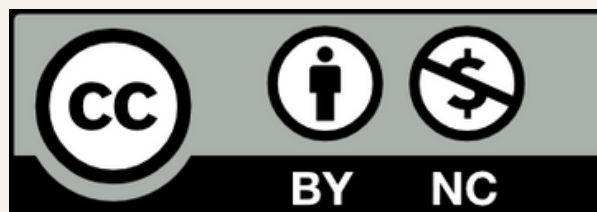
Kind Regards!



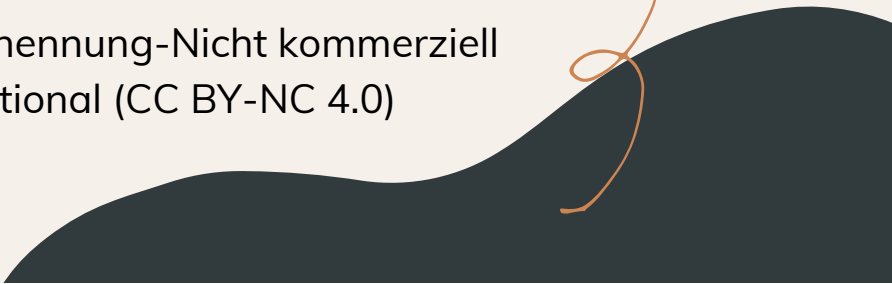


# Index

1_What does awareness mean?	... p. 4
2_What is discrimination?	... p. 6
2.1_What we can do against discrimination	... p.12
3_Awareness in the NGO	... p.14
4_Awareness working group - a process	... p.15
5_Communication within the team - feedback	... p.23
6_Sources & further links	... p.27



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# 1. What does awareness mean?

Awareness is the **state** of being awake and conscious and of acting in a certain situation.

Awareness is a **concept** that deals with physical, psychological and personal boundaries and discrimination in society. It aims to create a sense of consciousness about existing power structures in different areas of society.

The **term** awareness means more than to be aware. It means to be conscious, to be informed, to be sensitive to certain issues.

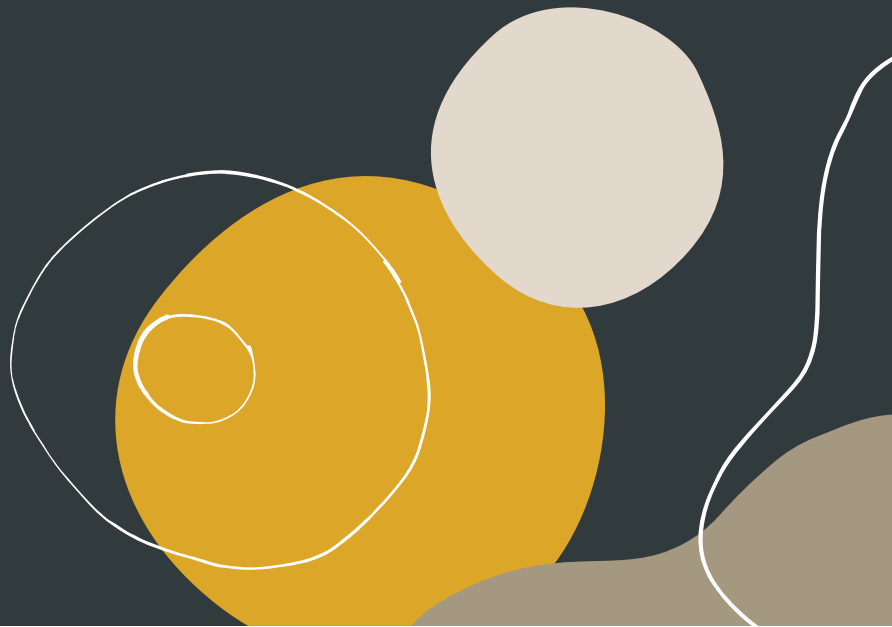
It is the knowledge that unequal power relations exist, the understanding of different perspectives on a situation or an issue due to different information, experiences, social positions.

Awareness means establishing and maintaining a mindful, responsible and supportive **way of dealing with each other**, e.g. in the association. This means treating each other with appreciation and respect and to minimise discrimination, violence and power imbalances.

Awareness requires taking **responsibility** for each other and for oneself. The aim is to create a safe atmosphere in which everyone can feel comfortable and personal boundaries are respected.

Those who value diversity in our community and in the organisation should also protect it and contribute to making everyone feel safe in it.

There are many aspects and methods to live more aware in everyday life, and there are many different situations in life in which we should behave more mindfully.



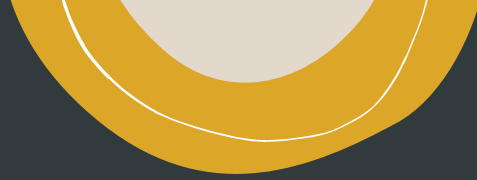


## 2. What is discrimination?


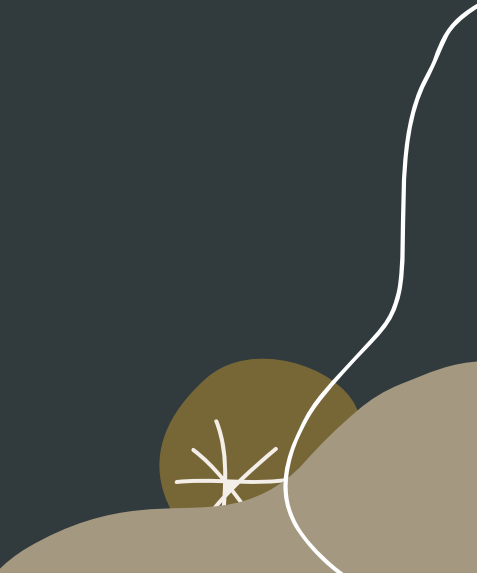

Discrimination is an objectively unjustified unequal treatment of a person on the basis of an actual or assigned identity characteristic.

Our society is shaped by discrimination, some examples are:

- Ableism: Discrimination against people with disabilities or chronic illnesses.
- Ageism: Discrimination against people because of their age.
- Bodyshaming: discrimination against people because of their body.
- Classism: discrimination against people with a low social or economic background or position.

- 
- Homophobia: Discrimination against people attracted to people of the same sex.
  - Misogyny: hatred and contempt towards women
  - Racism: discrimination against people being read as non-white or having a different ethnic origin.
  - Sexism: discrimination against people that are read as female
  - Transphobia: Discrimination against people whose gender identity does not correspond to the gender that was determined (by others) at birth.
  - Xenophobia: discrimination against people who are perceived as foreign.

The Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz ('General Equal Treatment Law', short: AGG), specifies the following characteristics on the basis of which people may not be discriminated against:

- racial attribution/'ethnic origin'
  - religion or world view
  - gender
  - sexual orientation
  - disability or chronic illness
  - age
- 
- 
- 

But individuals or groups can also be discriminated against or excluded on the basis of, for example, citizenship, family status or social origin.

The people who are not affected by discrimination have privileges, and can therefore move and develop more freely.

Discrimination and privilege are linked to hierarchical structures, access, resources and power. The opposite of discrimination is equal participation, recognition and inclusion.

### How does discrimination work:

Persons are marked based on a (real or attributed) characteristic as being different from the norm, meaning they are made "others" ("othering"). In this process, the person is reduced to one or only a few identity characteristics.

People who belong to or are assigned to marginalised, underrepresented groups are not perceived as individuals, but only as stereotypical representatives of a homogeneous, unified group.



There is an evaluation based on a standard or norm (set by the dominant society). Deviation from the norm leads to worse treatment with disadvantages for those affected.

If discrimination has occurred, it does not matter what the intention was, but what the consequences are for the person(s) concerned.

If someone runs over a person's foot, it is important to take care of the injury instead of arguing that it was not intentional.

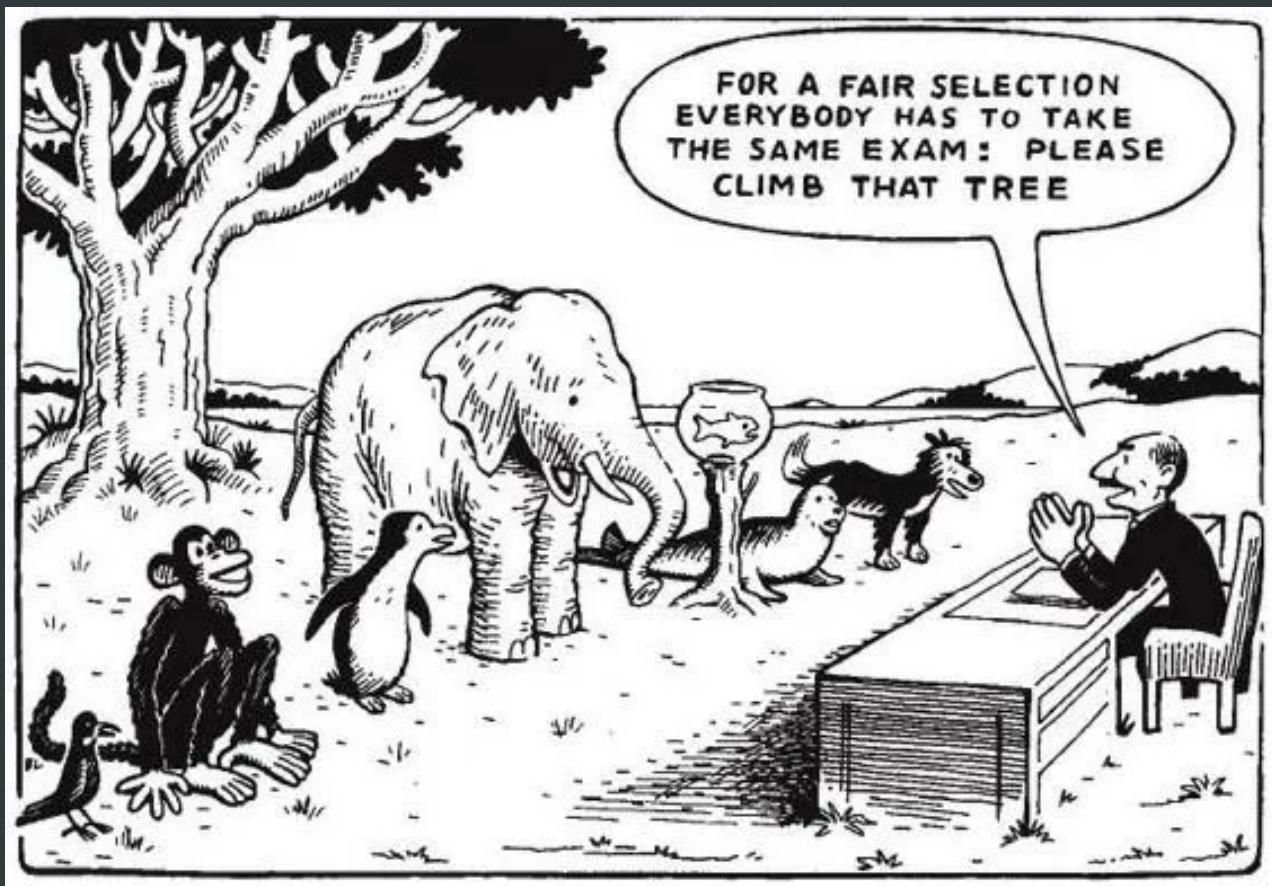


### Multiple discrimination

People can belong to several marginalised groups at the same time and be exposed to very specific forms of discrimination. Situations where discrimination occurs on more than one ground are referred to as 'Multiple Discrimination'. Possible forms of Multiple Discrimination are additive discrimination, reinforcing discrimination, intersectional discrimination.

## Forms of discrimination

- conscious/intentional or unconscious discrimination
- Immediate/direct discrimination or intermediate/indirect discrimination (seemingly neutral rules, criteria or procedures that discriminate against certain groups).
- Bullying/harassment (AGG): Behaviour that creates an environment characterised by intimidation, hostility, humiliation, degradation and abuse.



"Climb A Tree" by Hans Traxler 1975

## Levels of discrimination

- individual level - interaction between people
- institutional-structural level - traditions, laws, routines and procedures in organisations
- discursive level - values, archives of knowledge in a society, language and images in science, culture, media, advertising

Discrimination experiences are unpleasant, make people angry, helpless, powerless. They cause fear.

Discrimination has to do with power. Those who discriminate are in the more powerful position. Power can also be used responsibly and in a supportive way.



# WHAT WE CAN DO AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

Reflect on oneself:

- one's attitudes, images, stereotypes
- one's language and freedom of action "check your privileges"

Gain knowledge:

- Through books, podcasts, videos, films, websites, professional events

Give space to those affected. Listen to those affected.

Counteract discriminating attitudes in one's own environment:

- verbally, e.g. arguing
- directing actions, e.g. setting topics

Objections are important because they counteract the process of normalising discrimination!



Being mistake-friendly and a lifelong learner.

Intervene when we observe discrimination:

- React!
- Justify reaction, as a signal to
  - the responsible person "You can't do that!"
  - the person affected "You will get protection, it's not your fault".
  - the observers "Take action yourself!"

It is important to avoid "victimisation", meaning denying the affected person their own power to act. The person themselves decide how they want to deal with the situation. Figuratively speaking: Stand behind/aside the person, not in front of them.

- collect/keep evidence, documenting
- seek support
- professional, legal counselling for those affected



In the long term, within one's own organisation:

- Anti-discrimination as a self-image
- Raise awareness, organise further training
- Strengthening those affected
- Structural changes



# 3. Awareness in the NGO

Awareness of power relations and diversity as well as criticism of discrimination have a lasting effect in the sense of an "Association for All" if they are carried into all areas.

## Self-image

Principles and consensus formulated e.g. in the rules of the NGO, in the statutes and guidelines.

## Structures

Committees such as the board of directors, general assembly, members' assembly, accesses and rooms, information structures

## Awareness and Anti-discrimination

## internal communication

Language, interaction, association culture: non-violent, transparent, comprehensible, diversity-conscious,...

## external communication

Public appearance, such as website, media, services, public events

# 4. Awareness - A process

## Why is it important to have an Awareness Team within the NGO?

"Radio Blau defines itself as a participatory project and in principle every person has the opportunity to contribute."

"In Radio Blau's programme, no one is discriminated against on the basis of gender, origin, race or sexuality."

"Radio Blau exists on self-initiative as well as self-organisation and supports the idea of gender mainstreaming. In concrete terms, this means that Radio Blau supports individual, gender-independent further development in all areas such as broadcast content, organisational structure, communication culture, etc. as well as critically questioning gender-related unequal treatment in everyday radio practice, both in front of the microphone and behind the scenes."

FROM RADIO BLAU STATEMENT  
(TRANSLATED FROM GERMAN)



Despite the desired and written promotion of diversity, the reality of the association is different. If we examine the combination of committees, working groups and programme makers, we see that white cis men born in Germany form the majority.

Projects and themes (e.g. 2020 FemMärz, 2021 Zugangsoffen und trotzdem divers, 2022 Claim The Waves) as well as diversity-oriented staffing (BuFDi, board, freelance positions) have already brought about a visible change. There are more female and non-binary people in Radio Blau, but e.g. only very few people who were not born in Germany and hardly any BIPoC or people with physical limitations. We are not yet where we would like to be. And at the same time, conflicts are already occurring more frequently, as new people also bring new perspectives and demands into the association.

Change processes do not happen smoothly. Diversity requires the ability to deal with conflict, self-reflection, a willingness to make mistakes and an interest in learning.

Forming an awareness team was one of the outcomes of a process guide on diversity, as it is important that there is a contact person in the association who can be approached if someone has experienced or observed exclusion, bullying, harassment or discrimination.



The expectation of the awareness team in Radio Blau was (and still is) to be there for all those who are looking for support or information or a conversation - to be able to deal better with conflict situations and conflict topics on the radio, which means more consciously and more effectively.

In the middle of 2022, two of us started to build up an awareness team. We introduced ourselves at the next general assembly and asked with an open call who else would like to get involved in the team.

We had a good starting position:

- the creation of an Awareness team was a result of a collaborative process
- the Board was also in favour of the awareness working group.
- there was support and interest in the general assembly.
- the association applied for a grant to financially support the awareness team.

Our goal as an awareness team is to provide a safe space where people can talk about experienced or observed boundary violations and discrimination. We want to make awareness a permanent topic in the NGO and work to create an environment in which everyone can feel safe and personal boundaries are respected.

We want to learn and exercise together how to argue with each other more respectfully and how to deal with conflicts constructively. We also want to keep in mind that we are all human and make mistakes. There is always an opportunity to learn and grow from our own mistakes.

## What should a Awareness Team look like?

It is important to us that the people who form the awareness team

- are as diverse as possible
- are trusted people
- are well informed about the different aspects of discrimination and can offer information or can provide information or support when needed
- are prepared and courageous to speak out

We recommend a team of 4 to 6 people, as it is always an advantage if at least 2 people can offer support, listen and consult together.

Especially if the team consists of volunteers, it is good if more than one person can be asked, as not everyone always has time.

More than 6 people make the interaction in the team a bit more challenging - in larger teams it needs a good moderation and structure.

As a team, it is important that everyone can trust each other, feel safe with each other and be able to openly exchange ideas with each other, including being critical. A common basic understanding of awareness work is a good basis.

## Tasks of the Awareness Team

The range of tasks can be very focused or very broad. It is important that the tasks taken on by the awareness team also correspond to their capacities. We have experienced that it can quickly become quite a lot. It is important to be aware of one's own limits.

The basic task of an awareness team is to be present, visible and approachable and to offer support to those affected in case of boundary violations.

## Potential tasks:

- specific counselling, on request
- supportive accompaniment
- presence at plenary sessions, general assemblies
- communication with other working groups and committees in the association (e.g. board, office staff, course leaders)
- make awareness an issue/ topic through contributions (website, newsletter, radio), information and educational events
- regular presence in the spaces of the association, e.g. office hours
- offering spaces for personal reflection and learning
- moderation, mediation and conflict resolution
- exchange and networking
- further training of the awareness team
- application for funding of activities

In Radio Blau we try to **be present** and speak out or offer support in critical situations. We are present in the monthly general meetings to understand the conflicts or the different disagreements that people have in the association. In our regular **team meetings**, we discuss issues and conflicts that have come up in order to respond as a team - for example, criticisms about the radio programmes that might come both from inside and outside the organisation.




Following a criticism from listeners about a programme with Bodyshaming content and after some conflicts on the radio, we realised that members of the radio have different understanding and knowledge about what discrimination means.

In order to develop a **common understanding of discrimination** - a common starting point, we decided in the team to offer a workshop on discrimination and what to do about it.. (see p.6 - 13)

We also noticed that the **communication** between the different people in the radio could be better, clearer and more respectful. That's why we got input on communication methods, such as feedback.

The **workshops** were primarily aimed at people who work in radio (voluntarily or as employees) and are therefore regularly in direct contact with members, users, guests and listeners and who bear responsibility, such as the office crew, technical crew, board of directors, course leaders and public relations. The idea behind this is to first train people who represent the association and act as multipliers.



We have established **connections with various associations** that have set up teams similar to ours to share information and learn from their experiences in the field of awareness and to learn about other perspectives and approaches for the work in the association.

To reach more people, internal and external, we have started a series of **radio programmes** called "Awareness Talk". So far we have produced two programmes. We talk about what made us join the awareness team, why we think it is important to have such a group on the radio and what are our experiences and discoveries so far. At the moment we are editing the third programme, which is about body images, body shaming and body empowerment.

We are also planning theme and **discussion evenings** on the radio, on the topics that broadcasters would like to have more input and discussion on.

And we want to set up an **information station** on the radio, where we will provide books, brochures, flyers and any other information that will help us to deepen our knowledge about issues related to awareness and discrimination.



# 5. Communication within the team - feedback



There is a lot to be said about communication in the association and in the team. Poor communication and working atmosphere are at the top of the list of things that are most disruptive and demotivating in project and club work. At this point, however, we want to limit ourselves to just one feedback method for teams.

The goal of constructive feedback is not to criticize another person or their work, but to reflect back and encourage self-reflection. Feedback should always have the goal to lead to an improvement of processes, results and relationships.

Feedback can and should also be positive! Positive criticism, feedback and feedback encourage and motivate. Unfortunately, positive feedback is often forgotten in practice.



## The three step - feedback - method

### Step 1: Perception

I see....



I hear...

I perceive...

Perception means that external observations are described and interpretation is avoided.

### Step 2: Effects

This feels in me ... in me.



This makes/promotes in me ... .

This triggers ... in me.

Here we establish a relation to ourselves, more precisely to the effect that the previously perceived triggers in us.

### Step 3: Wish



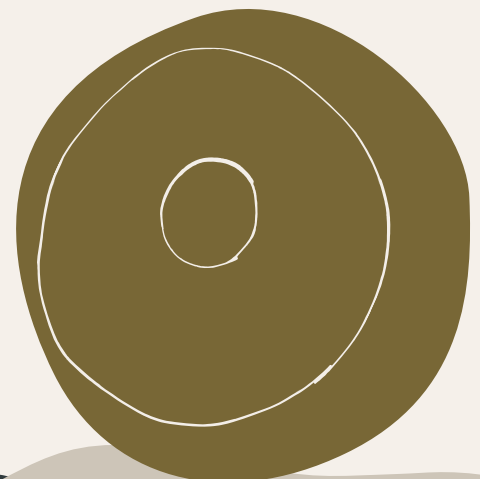
I wish ...

The wish can be aimed at the relationship or at reinforcement or change.

With the wish we address ourselves to the other person.

We ask for an action, for clarification, attention, etc.

Whether the other person responds to the wish is open.







Giving each other regular feedback:

- has a beneficial, healing and strengthening effect on relationships
- generates energy for new things and for one's own health
- creates change and potential development
- creates conflict management skills and a sense of community
- generates professionalism and puts the focus back on the topic at hand

principles of communication:

- It is not possible not to communicate
- Every communication has content and relationship aspects

Important components are listening, an open, respectful attitude, conscious pausing when irritated, and statements that are as clear and authentic as possible.





This is where our Action Concept for a first orientation for Awareness Teams concludes. We are convinced that such teams can contribute a great deal to ensuring that a diversity-oriented self-understanding is also reflected in the structure of the association and the culture of communication. Strengthening awareness promotes participation and appreciation of all, and therefore also strengthens the cohesion in the "association for all". Take care of yourselves and each other! We look forward to your comments, criticism and feedback!

Thank you for reading & best regards  
the Radio Blau Awareness Team  
[awareness@radioblau.de](mailto:awareness@radioblau.de)





# 6. Sources and further links

## Sources

Input by Peter Krötenheerdt "Nonviolent Communication"  
Workshop by Juliane Wagner "Recognising, preventing and counteracting discrimination"

## Further links

<https://a-team.blog/>

<https://rotersternleipzig.de/support-you-konfliktloesung/>

<https://www.transformativbildung.org/>

<https://www.vielfalt-mediathek.de/>

<https://projekte-leicht-gemacht.de/softskills/kommunikation/>

Fat Studies: Ein Glossar (KörperKulturen) von Herrmann, A., Kim, T. J., Kindinger, E., Mackert, N., Rose, L., Schorb, F., ... Villa, P.-I. (Hrsg.). (2022). Bielefeld: transcript Verlag.  
<https://doi.org/10.14361/9783839460054>



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