

**Men and Women Seeking #MeToo Congruence**  
***Being the #MeToo Imperfect Ally***



# MAN TO MAN: UNPACKING THE #METOO MOVEMENT

## A BOLD, INCLUSIVE CONVERSATION™

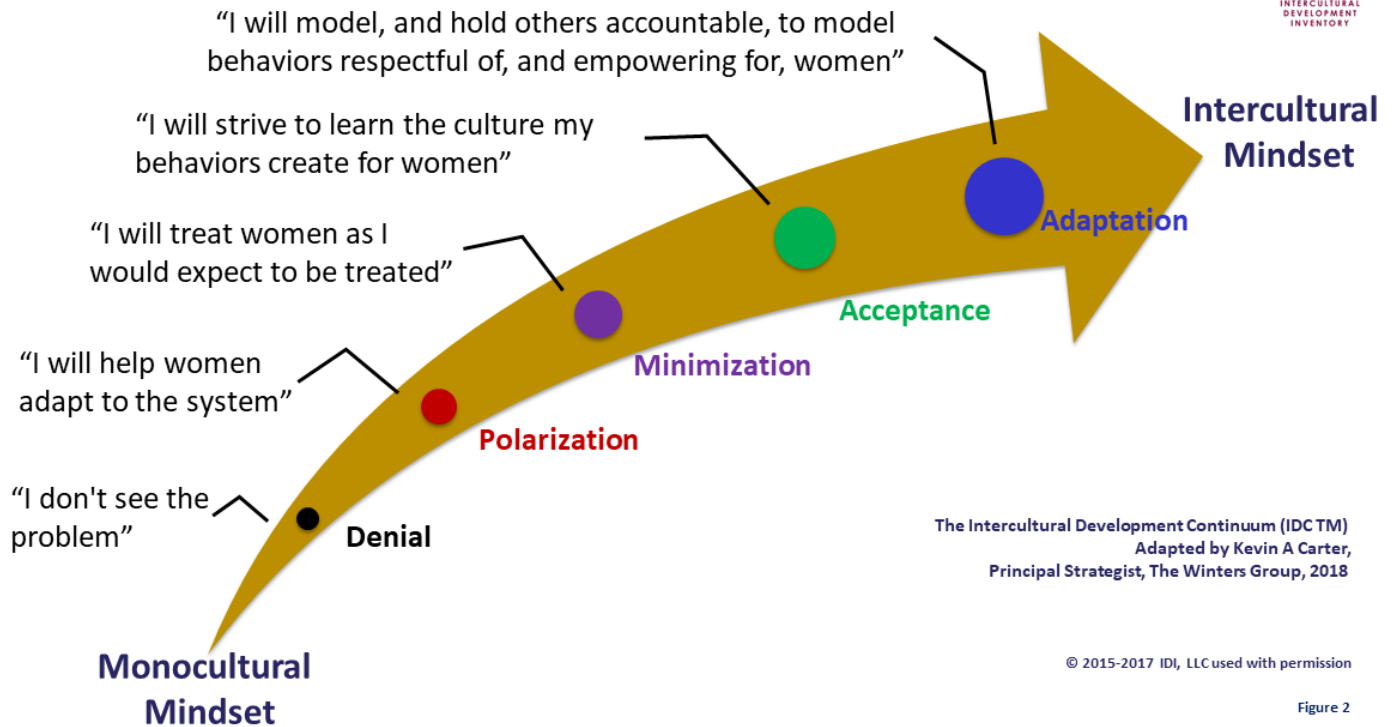
Tarana Burke, the original creator of the #MeToo hashtag, has said that #MeToo was originally conceived as a method to provide comfort and support for young women of color who were the victims of sexual harassment and violence. Later, she stated that #MeToo could be a conversation starter to prevent harassment and assault in a broader context.

The **#MeToo Imperfect Ally model** (figure above) was developed to help men be #MeToo allies, and to provide a method for men and women to gain understanding, alignment and congruence on the intentions, behaviors and impact that represent #MeToo progress. The model is based on theories, and the process detailed in the book, **We Can't Talk about That at Work: How to Talk about Race, Religion, Politics, and Other Polarizing Topics**, by Mary-Frances Winters, President & CEO of The Winters Group, Inc.

While **The #MeToo Imperfect Ally model** was originally developed to assist men, it can be utilized by both men and women to reflect, acknowledge, listen and engage in a manner that results in increased respect, inclusion and equity across gender lines in the workplace.



## Men and Women Seeking #MeToo Congruence Using the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC™)



### Reflect

The reflection begins with asking: what is my mindset on this issue?

The figure above shows the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC), which is an excellent gauge of one's mindset. In reflection, we ask ourselves whether our behavior towards women is at the stage of Acceptance or Adaptation. Ask yourself:

***Who have I been, who am I now and who do I need to be for #MeToo progress?***

### Acknowledge

Acknowledgment requires admitting that we have not always had meaningful conversations regarding consent and autonomy, nor have we modeled behavior reflective of an Adaptive mindset. As men, we are comfortable, assuming we know what women think. We may feel our respective behaviors align with the same value system without taking the time to ask or to truly know.

We are imperfect! We have made mistakes! The intentions to be *"gender blind," "live by the golden rule,"* or *"treat others as I would like to be treated,"* may have an unintended impact, such as issues important to women being underestimated, or ignored.

### Listen

Thus, we have to listen differently; to hear and understand rather than to refute or minimize. Listening means to have empathy, not sympathy, to understand the situation someone found themselves in, and to

acknowledge the complexities, options, or lack thereof, they had for assistance or recourse. Listening means:

- A willingness to let the other party dominate the discussion,
- Attentiveness to what is being said,
- Care not to interrupt,
- Use of open-ended questions,
- Sensitivity to the emotions being expressed, and
- The ability to reflect back to the other party the substance and feelings being expressed.

### Engage

If men can reflect, acknowledge and listen differently, we can engage with women and be proactive partners in finding tangible and pragmatic solutions regarding sexual harassment and violence in the workplace and society.

***Progress begins with acknowledging that you are an imperfect ally and offering women your support as an imperfect ally.***

The objective is to obtain understanding, congruence, or alignment on the intentions, behaviors, and impact that represents progress in personal, relational and positional power for women. What would success look and feel like for men and women? What would employees be saying? What behaviors and outcomes would be recognized and rewarded? What would be the buzz be among customers? How would they show their support?

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