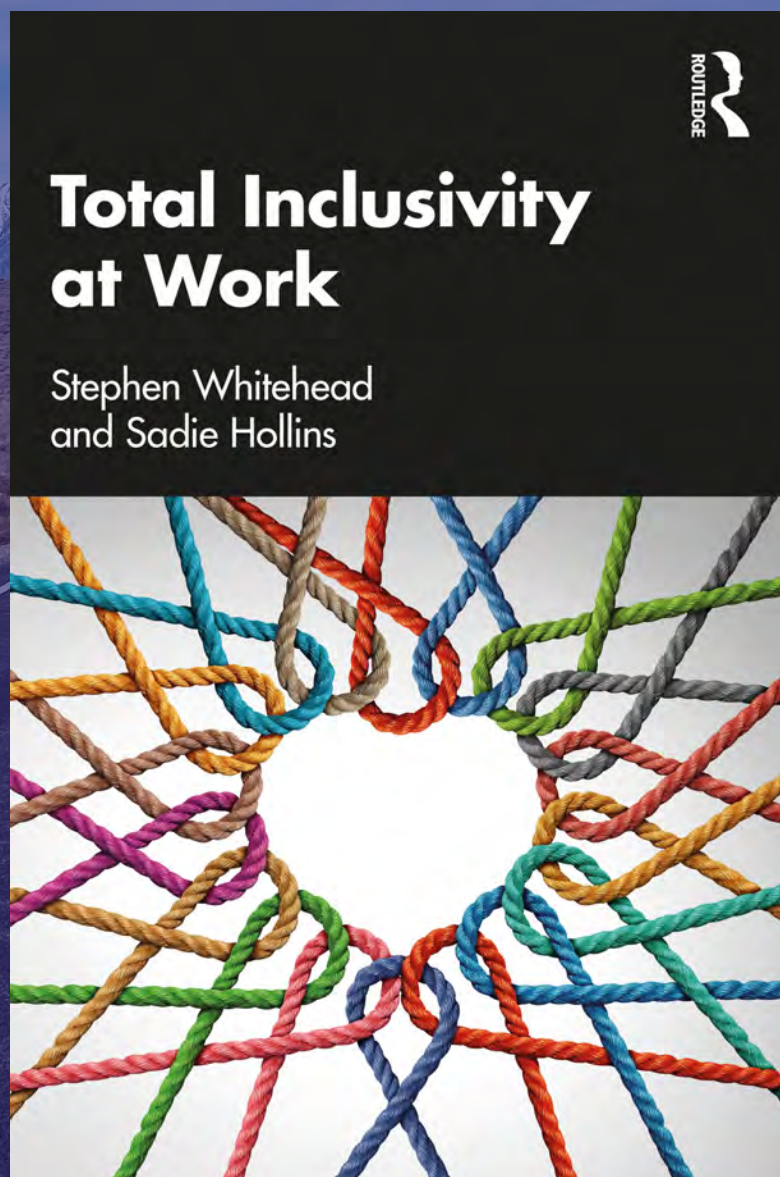


*Roadmap to Inclusive Leadership and Agility*

# FREE CHAPTER

## TOTAL INCLUSIVITY AT WORK

STEPHEN WHITEHEAD AND SADIE HOLLINS



# One

When I informed a friend of mine that I was planning to write a book titled *Total Inclusivity*, her reaction was amazement: “Wow, that’s a massive concept!” she said. And she is correct. Indeed, anyone who doesn’t recognise it as a ‘massive concept’, frankly, doesn’t get it.

‘Total’ means exactly that.

Diversity, equity, inclusion and justice (DEIJ) are the buzz words of the early 21st century, at least in Western countries. Fifty years ago, the buzz words were ‘equal opportunity’. Once upon a time finding any organisation with an ‘equal opportunities’ policy was as unlikely as finding a major organisation headed by an openly gay black person. Nowadays, most every organisation has its equal ops policy, usually occupying a small space in an HR office cabinet.

Very soon, every half-decently run organisation will be claiming to be a *Totally Inclusive Community*. At least I hope so, because that is one of the aims of this book.

However, I won’t consider it social progress or success for the book if all it results in is another well-intentioned policy document gathering dust in Personnel.

*Total Inclusivity* is action – purposeful, reflective, informed and relentless.

But it won’t happen unless you make it happen. Yes, you, the reader. *Total Inclusivity* is no one person’s responsibility – it is every person’s responsibility.<sup>1</sup>

However, it is unlikely you’ll need convincing of this. If you’ve opened the book and started reading, then very likely you are at least curious, and most likely you are committed to the concept of inclusivity and diversity in organisations, in society. Maybe all you need is some guidance to take you from where you are right now to where I hope you’ll be at the end of this book – an Advocate for *Total Inclusivity*.

Because without you, the Advocate, *Total Inclusivity* will remain a great idea which never caught on.

The concept of equal opportunities<sup>2</sup> eventually did catch on. But only through the sheer determination of individuals from every part of the globe. People like you made equal opportunities real. Well, mostly.

It may not be correctly practiced everywhere and in all organisations, but at least people now understand what equal opportunity means, what it stands for. There is no room for ambiguity.

Total Inclusivity will have the same impact, because Total and Inclusivity not only sound right together, they are self-evidently right together. Like equal opportunities, there is no room for ambiguity here, either.

In other words, inclusivity cannot be partial, and any attempt to make it partial immediately kills it – stone dead.

Just as opportunity must be undeniably equal, so must inclusivity be undeniably total. If Inclusivity is not Total then it is no more than a sound bite, a rhetorical gesture towards a fairer and more just society.

And surely, after all this time, after all those decades of equal opportunities as policy and practice, after Stonewall, MeToo, Black Lives Matter, Rodney King, Stephen Lawrence, George Floyd, Gay Pride and every other attempt to raise the bar of organisational accountability, personal accountability, social justice, we've arrived at the point of Total Inclusivity or nothing.

#### DEFINITION

To turn Total Inclusivity into social justice action that people can participate in, and do so without feeling they are getting trapped in some ideological minefield, we need a simple but powerful definition. And this is it:

Total Inclusivity means recognising, valuing, protecting and nurturing diverse identities, including those of race, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability, age, religion and language.

If you recognise the inherent worthiness of that intention, if it speaks to both your heart and your head, then you are on your way to being an Advocate for Total Inclusivity.

You may ask why not include every other possible aspect of human identity within this definition. The answer is simple: it would be impossible to create such a definition without losing its impact; the list would, in theory at least, have no end. Why? Because every single one of us, each of the 7.7 billion people alive today, is unique, occupying and experiencing a different mix of identities across different



cultures and communities. And there is a second, equally valid reason; anyone who can accept to 'value, protect and nurture' race, gender, sexual and class differences, together with those of age, religion and language and do so across the human spectrum, will be for inclusivity in total.

So does anyone get excluded from Total Inclusivity?

No.

Those for Total Inclusivity exclude no one.

Those against Total Inclusivity exclude themselves.

### **THE CASE FOR TOTAL INCLUSIVITY**

At time of writing, the British royal family is under siege following accusations of racism from two of its most prominent members; global counterterrorism experts are debating whether the misogynist incel movement should be classified as a terror threat; hate crimes against Asians are spiking in the USA and UK; sexual assaults and harassment are being reported in colleges and universities around the world; a former boss of one of the world's biggest companies is forced to resign for claiming that the concept of unconscious bias is "complete and utter crap"; the Chinese government is attempting to 'mitigate male feminisation' by teaching 'proper masculinity'; rape allegations are sweeping across Australian politics; Women's Day protests turn violent in Mexico; towns across Poland have passed anti-LGBTQ+ resolutions; the World Health Organization reports that 1 in 3 women worldwide is subject to physical or sexual assault during her lifetime; while the USA is still recovering from the recent physical and political assault on its democracy and Capitol by self-declared anti-Semites, neo-fascists; misogynists; racists and white supremacists.

Summarising one core aspect of the problem, the World Health Organization states:

[male] violence against women is . . . causing harm to millions of women and their families and has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. But unlike Covid-19, violence against women cannot be stopped by a vaccine.

(UN News, 2021)

We don't need to make a case for Total Inclusivity. The case has already been well and truly made.

The question is, perhaps, not so much do we need Total Inclusivity, but are we too late to have Total Inclusivity?

See the news on any day of any week of any month and you'll see the same stories – prejudice, bias, male violence, assault, rape, harassment, injustice, discrimination, hatred, ignorance and mindless death and destruction, not just of each other but of the planet itself.

If an alien landed today and saw the state we were in no one would blame her if she immediately got back on her spaceship and hurried home to Planet Z. Of course, what the alien would have missed is the larger context. Dire as things appear right now, and despite the pushback by fringe social elements and the plainly misinformed, as I claim below, society is becoming more, not less, civilised and this includes a greater awareness, acceptance, tolerance and willingness to embrace diversity.

For this we can largely thank the massification of further and higher education over the past five or six decades. As global research is revealing, young, college-/university-educated people (Generation Z and



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millennials) are much more likely not only to embrace diversity but to demand it (Pew Research, 2019).

And it is this younger generation which will bring in Total Inclusivity, hopefully supported and encouraged by many of those over 50 years of age.

Encouraged by elders or not, Total Inclusivity will arrive sooner or later.

Just as there was and is an undeniable logic and justice to anti-slavery, universal suffrage, anti-racism, equal-opportunities legislation, gay marriage and trans rights, so there is the same undeniability to Total Inclusivity.

Which is why I believe TI is unstoppable.

Though that won't deter some from trying to stop it.

Which takes us to one of the points made in this introduction: fear of the other, the unfamiliar, the different.

No single book can remove fear of the unknown, the other, from the minds of all humanity – this trait is too deeply embedded in the human psyche. But what a single book can do is explain why a concept such as Total Inclusivity can bring benefits to individuals and, in this case, organisations also.

In other words, Total Inclusivity will be good not only for you and your identity mix but also for your organisation, your work, your whole relationship to employment.

Social change towards greater justice and less ignorance can and should be backed up by legislation, the judicial system, education and, where necessary, positive action to force an end to deeply rooted discrimination. As part of this push we can insist on 'zero tolerance' towards fascism, racism, misogyny and homophobia and back this up by laws and the full weight of judicial systems. However, in the final reckoning the individual has to accept this change, believe it to be best for themselves and society and not fear it. Such transformations in thinking and culture will only come about because the greater mass of people demand it.<sup>3</sup>

Globally, we are at a tipping point and have been certainly since the late 1990s. The tipping point is towards the dominance of progressive thinking regarding race, gender, sexuality and class. However, that outcome is not guaranteed. That there is a fierce backlash against social justice and fairness should not surprise us. Certain sections of society will be required to rethink their relationship to women, LGBTQ+ people, Black people, and indeed all those social and ethnic groups which have hitherto been on the receiving end of bias, discrimination and prejudice.

This book is, therefore, not creating Total Inclusivity, it is predicting it. TI is not offered as a strand of progressive thinking but the very definition of the changes which no single book or person began but which billions of us around the world now accept as necessary, proper and right for humanity.

But more than simply predicting Total Inclusivity, this book aims to convince you, the reader, to become an Advocate for change; to become confident, secure and bold enough to say, “yes, I am for Total Inclusivity and will work towards bringing it about in both my personal and professional lives”.

Of course, it is very possible you are already at that point and have been working for such change for most of your life. If so, then please use this book as a support, a guide and a reference point, especially with regards to one of the key aspects of change which needs to take place if humanity is to become more just and fairer – organisations and their cultures.

## RELATIONSHIP TO ORGANISATIONS

The inherent character of humanity has never been isolation but association. We start with families and build it up from there; networks, groups, villages, towns, cities and eventually the modern nation state, which many historians consider first emerged in 1648 with the Treaty of Westphalia.

The material drive behind this merging and organising is quite simple: safety and productivity.

Slowly but surely, over many millennia, humans have been organising themselves to the point that today we could not survive without organisations. They provide the essential framework for our continued safety and prosperity.

Consider this question: how many organisations have to exist just to make your life tolerable?

You cannot begin to calculate. Truth is, no one knows how many organisations there are in the world right now. Nor do you have any idea just how many organisations you have a personal stake in, directly or indirectly.

You drink, eat, wash, work, travel, communicate, learn, listen, get health care, pay taxes, open a bank account, go shopping, get a credit card, watch a movie, buy a pizza, listen to music, post on social media, switch on a light, flush the loo, phone a friend, read a book, look for a job, join the army, navy or air force, go to school, college or university, get mugged and call the police and then your lawyer, set fire to a chip pan

and call the fire brigade and then a decorator followed by your insurance company.

None of these activities can happen without organisations, countless numbers of them, whose task it is to ensure your life runs smoothly enough.

No one, not even the homeless person wandering the streets of London, Paris, Mumbai or New York, can exist without organisations to offer some degree of protection, safety, possibility of survival.

But as is explained in this book, organisations are more than material providers. They are also existential providers.

You may not be tempted to invest your sense of identity in your local tax office, but you most certainly will in your work role, your professional status, your job title, your employing organisation.

For a great many of us, our relationship with paid work is more important than our relationship with our family. We may not like it to be that way, but that is the reality.

During our most productive decades (mid-20s to mid-60s) we will spend far more time at work than with our loved ones, our nearest and dearest. Over the course of a lifetime, one-third of our life will be spent working in organisations, approximately 90,000 hours. Then add in the time spent commuting, doing Zoom meetings from home, answering emails during the evening and weekend and worrying about office politics.

Yes, organisations dominate your life, and there is no escaping that fact.

In which case, it is a great shame some studies suggest 80% of us hate our jobs.

Actually, I doubt that is true. Most of us enjoy our jobs, though we may well come to despair of the organisation we work for.

We can always change our jobs, but we can never escape organisations – even if we can afford to drop out of the rat race and write that novel, organisations will pursue us.

It would be nice, therefore, if these organisations, from global media corporations to your local bus company, were loved, even liked. Unfortunately, they are not. They are, at best, tolerated and, at worst, hated. We prefer it when they just do their job and stay out of our lives.

We have a contradictory relationship to organisations; we need them to survive but we loath them at the same time.

Any organisational leader reading this should stop and think why that is the case and whether or not it bothers them.



However, please do not imagine that the primary aim of this book is to make organisations loveable!

Such an accomplishment would be far beyond my capabilities or, indeed, anyone else's.

This book is not concerned if you get frustrated and angry with your bank's online customer service, the persistent lateness of your local train service, or the fact that you cannot get a reliable plumber to fix your kitchen sink.

What is of concern is whether that organisation is contributing to society, not simply by doing the job for which we pay it but by being a Totally Inclusive Community.

### RELATIONSHIP TO COMMUNITY

'Community' is one of the most powerful yet misused words in the English language, equalled if not surpassed in exploitation and emotional connection only by 'family'.

The Oxford English dictionary defines 'community' as follows:

A body of individuals; the common people; members of a collective body; people living in the same locality; having the same religion, profession, etc.; a body of people living together and building goods in common; identity; the state of being shared or held in common; social intercourse, communion, fellowship, a sense of common identity.

Accepting that this is a necessarily eclectic summary of a highly complex if not subjectively understood word, the principles of commonality, association and shared identity are clear.

Most organisational leaders may like to imagine they are leading a community, but if that were ever the case it is much less so today, because society is changing faster than the organisations which serve it. As is explored in following chapters, work organisations are not always communities of belonging. They may hope to be, if only for enhancing employee commitment. But few organisations manage to break out of their performance-fixated straitjackets to become work cultures within which the individual feels and expresses, a positive emotional connection.

For many of us, the only time we will allow ourselves to embrace open community with our fellow citizens is during sports contests; notably football, rugby, soccer, hockey and, of course, the Olympic

Games. But even here, the ubiquitous flag waving, chanting and firecrackers merely hide the fact that certain identities are less welcome than others; Black football players, Indigenous-people hockey players, gay tennis players, trans athletes and intersex weightlifters being just some examples.

What humanity has managed to achieve over the past few millennia is amazing technological advancement, largely through the application of organisational effort combined with occasional individual genius.

What society has not been able to achieve is communality within organisations and certainly not between individuals. There was probably more sense of community back in the brutal and dirty Middle Ages than there is in today's futuristic, sterile metropolises.

People's sense of belonging has not been enhanced by modern technology and certainly not by social media. If anything, the opposite has occurred – millions of us feel lonelier, more disconnected, isolated, existentially insecure.

Little wonder, then, that there is now a burgeoning global industry in 'well-being' and feeling positive about oneself.

It is unfair to blame organisations for this situation, but they do have a responsibility to try and address it. For example, one can accept that Facebook was started with the best of intentions – 'bringing people together'. That it has all turned out rather different does tell us something about Facebook, though in truth, it tells us more about ourselves.

Globalisation is another example. Who could possibly be against globalisation? Well, it turns out a good many of us are. Globalisation has not brought everyone together; on the contrary, it has made the disadvantaged and disenfranchised feel angry and alarmed as the world they grew up in and felt comfortable with fast disappeared, usually to the other side of the world. Dismissing them as 'deplorables' isn't going to encourage such folk to embrace their fellows. There are large swathes of the UK and USA, for example, that are, today, 'broken heartlands' (Payne, 2021) and not unreasonably 'full of fury' (Osnos, 2021).

Total Inclusivity is not intended to burden organisations with the responsibility of remaking the world into a happier, less conflictual place. Sure, that would be nice, but let's be realistic here.

The aim of Total Inclusivity is to bring community into organisations, thereby improving workplace culture and climate. This won't happen by organisations marketing themselves as communities or 'families' in their social media. It will only happen by organisations fully embracing the

diversity manifest across society; by becoming communities of belonging for all their stakeholders. In short . . .

by recognising, valuing, protecting and nurturing diverse identities, including race, gender, sexual orientation, class, age, religion and language.

There is an urgency to this agenda because people are increasingly likely to define themselves, self-categorise, through aspects of race, gender and sexuality – not solely by place, nationhood or professional status. Identity is becoming politicised but also more complex and contested, intersectional and dynamic.

This urgency is compounded not least because the nature of work is changing fast; it is becoming increasingly automated, remote, temporary, flexible and hybrid. This leaves the employee more likely to feel remote and temporary, engendering in them a lack of loyalty and association with their organisation. Indeed, employee loyalty is rapidly becoming the exception rather than the expectation (Kreacic et al., 2022).

And then there is the endemic of toxic work cultures, examples of which are given in this book. In the past year, 1 in 5 American workers have quit their job because of toxic behaviour at work (e.g. racism, sexual violence, bullying), while 64% of UK employees report that a toxic workplace culture negatively impacted their mental health (Bishop, 2021). Research suggests that in Germany, the number of those planning to leave their jobs is 20%; France 17%, Spain and China 14%. And that doesn't include a further 18% of employees globally wanting to quit (Kreacic et al., 2022).

Employees are not happy. Clearly, the need for Total Inclusivity in organisations is overwhelming.

If bosses still don't immediately see the need for TI, then perhaps they'll recognise that societal expectations are changing, heightened in respect of organisational and corporate responsibility and made urgent, not least through the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and enforced lockdowns. Leaders are being held to a greater accountability regarding social justice and in their public and private lives. As I explain in the book, only if an organisation can become a Totally Inclusive Community can it survive the changes which are fast arriving in the workplace. However, such a transformation in workplace culture cannot come about simply

through periodic workshops in anti-racism and anti-sexism. It can only come about through change – deeper understanding and appreciation of Total Inclusivity – within every member of the organisation/community.

Organisations are not only locations where people might earn a living, they are sites of identification where individual employees at all levels can achieve a sense of belonging. But belonging to an organisation is risky and it is tenuous, especially in this increasingly transient world and its workplaces. Organisations can appear impersonal, ruthless, uncaring and insincere. Organisations may be profitable, but they can also be seen as heartless. And yet we spend most of our working lives within them, often in a fraught relationship. Even those of us who love our work rarely love the organisation we work for.

Around the world, organisations, big and not so big, are grappling with the complexities and challenges of not only generating a feeling of community and loyalty within their work culture but attempting to implement anti-racist, anti-sexist, pro-LGBTQ+, gender-equitable, non-discriminatory and individual-safeguarding policies and practices. In other words, many of them are striving for inclusivity.

However, I recognise that the concept of inclusivity, at least for complex organisations, can be tricky to grasp and harder to implement. Language, media, stereotyping, history, culture and the sheer politics of it all conspire to create confusion, and out of confusion often arises resistance. People don't understand the terms; they fear saying or doing the 'wrong thing'; they baulk at notions of 'political correctness'; they reject 'unconscious bias' and the idea of 'white privilege'. Yet they may well also recognise the vitality and importance of the MeToo Movement and Black Lives Matter and accept the concept of equality and safety for all.

We are living through highly sensitive times. But maybe that is how it must be if we, as a society, are to move forward.

This book is designed to help individuals embrace Total Inclusivity and the organisations they are connected with to become Totally Inclusive Communities, wherein diversity is valued, healthy identities enabled, respect for difference prevails, and every member counts – regardless of their identity mix.

In short, a Totally Inclusive organisation is first and foremost a community. Whether for-profit or non-profit, if an organisation is not a community, then it is failing its employees, clients, stakeholders. In which case, one is entitled to ask what is its purpose, what is its true value?



## RELATIONSHIP TO YOU

Every book tells a story of some description, and this book is no exception. But where is the hero of this book's narrative? Is it Total Inclusivity? Is it Organisations? Is it community? No, it is You. You are the protagonist, the lead character, the champion.

Without you, this book is just more noise to add to the already deafening cacophony arising from 'culture wars', 'identity politics' and the rest.

The aim is not to read the book and think, 'okay, I get it, that makes sense' but then carry on with your life as before. This book is not intended as a deeply theoretical academic thesis on the merits of inclusivity and diversity – to be read and then shelved.

It is written as nothing more or less than a call to change the world around us, and that can only start with the individual – you.

At this stage, one could insert any number of profound quotes from famous individuals to emphasise the point. And this quote by French author Anais Nin (1961) serves the purpose well:

"We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are".

And that is the challenge we all face: to see beyond our own identity boundaries; to be bold and brave enough to step outside our subjective cultural comfort zone and empathise with others, strangers. Immediately we begin to empathise with others so we stop seeing them as 'the Other' (de Beauvoir, 1953). That is the best start anyone can make on the road to Total Inclusivity.

Of course, if it were that simple then why hasn't humanity already achieved this goal? After all, it is not as if we haven't had time – *homo sapiens* has been around more than 300,000 years.

Why are we still grasping for Total Inclusivity? Is it because of the negative traits which continue to infest the human psyche: fear, envy, greed, insecurity, ignorance?

Certainly, it is troubling to reflect that artificial intelligence will soon likely dominate the world of work. AI won't be hindered by fear of the Other, but nor will it have our capacity for love, understanding, compassion and belief in the innate goodness of people.

Organisations are under economic pressure to adopt ways of working which result in a dehumanising process. At the same time they are under

societal pressure to respond to the growing demand to become more human; cultivating well-being and connection within their stakeholders.

I hope this book helps push organisations and their members in the latter direction. Because if the trend of organisations to become less humanistic accelerates, then we have a major threat to humanity. Given the dominance of organisations in our lives, it would seem to make good sense to turn them into Totally Inclusive Communities – environments which embrace not just diversity but the best of human character. Better to have Totally Inclusive Communities supporting the human race than AI-controlled organisations. Once we have the latter, then our future will not be ours to decide.

The reality is that humanity has some catching up to do. Technology is jumping ahead far faster than humans are evolving. Humanity does risk being left behind. Already we can see pockets of global society regressing to ideas, practices and beliefs which should have disappeared around the time of Charlemagne and certainly the time of Churchill.

Despite these warnings and provisos, the concept of Total Inclusivity is offered with hope and optimism. For one thing, during my 70-plus years I have personally witnessed the human capacity for tolerance and empathy and the human desire for knowledge – not least as an educationalist working well away from my own cultural comfort zone. I and countless millions like me are direct beneficiaries of the massification of education which occurred in the UK and the West from the 1950s and subsequently spread around the world, informing eventually the globalisation impulse. Globalisation may have its downsides, but it is not possible to spread one's wings and travel without realising a single truth: people around the world desire the same thing – to be valued as individuals, respected and accepted for who they are.

We all want Total Inclusivity because we all want to be included.

The only question is, when will we have it?

### **CHANGING VALUE SYSTEMS**

It is a steaming summer's evening in downtown Detroit – not only is the weather simmering but so are racial tensions. Riotous violence involving thousands of young males, Black and white, has erupted across the city. The KKK is out in force, and mobs of white men are hunting down Black people. Detroit police have imposed an unofficial curfew but are mostly enforcing it in Black neighbourhoods. Any young Black men they catch

outdoors ‘after hours’ are being summarily executed. Eventually, the dead number 34, the injured 433 (Detroit Historical Society, 2021).

That event occurred in June 1943 while Americans, Black and white, were fighting against fascist Germany, Italy and Japan.

Have our value systems improved since then, bearing in mind events such as this were repeated in the USA throughout the remainder of the 20th century and into the 21st? It is difficult to say categorically, though what has changed is that contemporary society is much more likely to challenge police violence against ethnic minorities and to condemn the social and institutional conditions which feed racism and racial violence. This 1943 act of official murder against Black people went largely unnoticed at the time, at least outside of Detroit, and even today one can speculate that few Americans have heard of this incident.

But in 2020, the filmed killing of one Black man, George Floyd, by American police exploded into the largest social movement in American history and the largest global social movement against racial injustice and discrimination so far seen. That signals a changing value system, and it signals social progress.<sup>4</sup>

However, one can reflect that after hundreds of years of individual and institutionalised racism against Black people, white people still need reminding that ‘Black Lives Matter’.

Although Total Inclusivity is offered as a humanistic value system, which is as it should be, we should also recognise that humans have been struggling with value systems throughout history. Over 2,500 years ago, Buddha came up with a simple value system for humanity: treat all as equal, do no harm and be compassionate. Most every religious and spiritual value system ever since has tried to keep to the same principles – at least in rhetoric. In practice the principles too often fall prey to that most human of traits: fear of the other.

Of course, there are times when it makes perfectly good sense to fear the other – a cursory look at human behaviour down the millennia will convince you that others can be dangerous and sometimes a threat to one’s own survival.

But we don’t live in the ancient past, a world described by Thomas Hobbes as ‘solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short’ (2017, p. 1651). We live in the 21st century: the age of globalisation; international travel; conspicuous consumption; a global middle class; 24/7 shopping, social media and entertainment; advanced technology; health, safety and longevity. Hobbes would be spurred to write a rather different book to

Leviathan if he were alive today – even if he did need to vaccinate against COVID-19 in order to do it.

The key difference between the Hobbesian past and the present is, of course, education. Today, even the poorest countries attempt to offer some level of formal education to their children. Since the end of World War II, formal education, from pre-school through to university, has developed dramatically, thereby changing our world and our prospects for the better. And while the quality of and opportunity for education can differ enormously not just between countries but within countries, the principle of education for all is firmly established as both a human right and a human expectation (UNESCO, 2009).

Sure, the reality is very different to the rhetoric. Equality of educational opportunity is not equally spread around the world; race, gender, sexuality and class all play a major role in determining your life chances, and that is true whether you are a female born in Afghanistan, a gay person born in Uganda or a male born into poverty in a European city.

Yet despite the unacceptable and ongoing differences between us in terms of opportunity, wealth and education, in my mind there is no question that an Elias-type ‘civilising process’ (Elias, 2000) is taking place and that it is a global phenomenon. What people in, say, the 14th century accepted as normal societal behaviour (e.g. witch burning; public torture and executions; genocide; massacre of religious minorities; slavery; absolute monarchical rule – and let’s not talk about their health, safety, justice and welfare ‘systems’) is no longer tolerated by the mass of people and indeed is proscribed in international law – even if examples of the above remain present in sections of 21st-century global society.

It is self-evident, therefore, that our value systems are slowly improving, even while they still have a long way to go.

Which is why we now need to accept Total Inclusivity.

As members of a global society which prioritises and seeks to protect and ensure human rights, social justice, safety and equal opportunity, inclusivity can never be partial; it can only ever be total. In other words, Total Inclusivity is not just for the few; it is for each and every one of us, now and for generations to come.

## HOW TO USE THE BOOK

Each chapter has its own composite character and theme, leading to the final discussion regarding Total Inclusive Advocacy. We recommend, therefore, that you read the chapters in sequence thereby ensuring you follow



the reasoning and discussion but also so you are able to incrementally develop your own understanding of and relationship to Total Inclusivity.

It may be that you find some chapters more persuasive than others, some of my arguments more compelling than others. That is perfectly understandable. No book can say all there is to say on a concept such as Total Inclusivity, and I fully recognise there is a lot more to be said and written on this concept. But this book is at least the start.

At the end of each chapter is a section for reflections. Reflecting is a big part of the Total Inclusivity journey! What I have designed, therefore, are Reflection points, Guidance on how to draw Total Inclusivity into both your personal and work lives and, finally, at the conclusion of each chapter, a Commitment. I've written up such commitments to align with the appropriate chapter, but don't feel obliged to follow them. You may well decide that, given your unique life circumstances, a different commitment would work better for you.

### BEING REFLECTIVE

Recognising that reflectiveness is important, it is a skill which benefits from some conscious development. If we wish to change in a self-aware, positive way (not simply as a negative emotional reaction to events) then we need to develop a little critical, constructive and creative thinking, and that entails being reflective.

This book is not intended to teach you how to be reflective, only to recognise this skill to be a central aspect in becoming a Total Inclusive Advocate.

So here is my recommended (and short) learning process towards developing reflectivity in your approach to life; the Nine Rs' of Reflectivity:

- 1 Recall a powerful situation, experience, event, encounter you had, or simply something you read or saw, which really stirred up your emotions. Perhaps a relationship breakup, family fall-out, a toxic encounter at work.
- 2 Remember the feelings you had, the types of emotions you experienced.
- 3 Recollect how long it took you to get over those emotions and how they dominated your thoughts and life at the time.
- 4 Re-examine why the emotions took so long to let go of you and how you now think of that particular situation.

- 5 Recognise what you learned from that situation and what you've since learned from it – not least about yourself.
- 6 React to that recognition with the intent to next time have more control over your reactions and behaviour – decide to see deeper into situations than emotive responses allow.
- 7 Reason with yourself that there is a better way to be in the world, one which is not immediately and emotionally reactive but which is secure, mindful, positive and stable.
- 8 Reflect on how you would now hope to behave should a similar situation or event occur in your life. Would you react the same way or hope not to? The choice is yours to make, but it starts with looking back at yourself and your reactions in a more critical, less emotional, more constructive and creative way.
- 9 Realise that to be the person you can be you must first see the person you are.

## CHAPTER 1: REFLECTIONS, GUIDANCE AND COMMITMENT

*Reflection Exercise:* What does Total Inclusivity mean to you? Would you define it differently? If so, how?

*Guidance for Implementation:* Consider where Total Inclusivity operates in your life, where it is completely absent and where you'd like to see it operating. A good place to start is to consider when you have felt excluded from organisations (or any networks) on account of your race, gender, sexuality or class, or indeed any other aspect of your identity. How did this exclusion, discrimination, make you feel? Who, if anyone, stepped up to help you understand this experience? The first step towards Total Inclusivity is this recognition that you too have value, and you too should be respected for who you are.

And if you've never felt excluded from organisations or networks on account of your identity (e.g. race, gender, sexuality or class) then reflect on why that has been the case for you but not for so many other people. Can you move from your own privileged position to a position of recognising how and why other people are less privileged on account of their identity mix?

*Commitment:* Start to think about your motivations, expectations and assumptions regarding Inclusivity and diversity. How big a step is it for you to embrace Total Inclusivity – without waiting for someone else to do so first? And if it is a massive step, why is that?

## NOTES

- 1 The South African concept of Ubuntu, meaning “I am because we are”, defines it neatly.
- 2 Defined as the absence of discrimination based on race, colour, age, gender, national origin, religion or mental or physical disability and the right to equivalent opportunities for employment regardless of race, colour, sex or national origin.
- 3 The ‘zero tolerance’ concept with TI arose from discussion with Jeff Franz-Lien on Quora (see [www.quora.com/Since-morals-change-over-time-what-are-some-things-we-do-now-as-a-society-that-will-be-deemed-unacceptable-100-years-from-now/answer/Stephen-Whitehead-16?\\_\\_nsrc\\_\\_=4&\\_\\_snid3\\_\\_=30984515423&comment\\_id=240648010&comment\\_type=2](https://www.quora.com/Since-morals-change-over-time-what-are-some-things-we-do-now-as-a-society-that-will-be-deemed-unacceptable-100-years-from-now/answer/Stephen-Whitehead-16?__nsrc__=4&__snid3__=30984515423&comment_id=240648010&comment_type=2)).
- 4 The Black Lives Matter movement began in 2013 following the murder of Trayvon Martin. There had been multiple instances of police brutality against Black Americans prior to 2020; see <https://blacklivesmatter.com/about>.