

## Neutralizing Prejudices

Rúni Johannesen

### Abstract

This study presents a social profile of a tolerant and global ideological behavior. The in-group-behavior revolves around enforcing the tolerant virtue and rooting out and eliminating prejudiced attitudes that affect minorities and the collective environment. The main concern is conceptualized as “enabling a nonjudgmental environment” for oneself and others. The recurrent solution to this concern is “neutralizing prejudices.” Neutralizing prejudices is a means to engage and deal with prejudiced oppression and prejudice-related behavior. Mindsets with a tolerant worldview use neutralization as a way to assert their worldview and cope with the prejudiced attitudes they experience towards minorities and the collective environment. Neutralizing prejudices is a way to negate, defuse, disqualify, or override a prejudiced context by applying an opposite or contrary force or effect. As such, neutralizing is mainly a rhetorical requisite. As a basic social process, neutralizing prejudices is a process of “collective regrouping” in relation to a social, moral, and global objective.

**Keywords:** Neutralizing prejudices, prejudiced oppression, tolerance, enabling a nonjudgmental environment, global ideology, collective regrouping.

### Introduction

This classic grounded theory study started out examining how ordinary people from the Faroe Islands saw themselves in a global context. About half of the subjects, who were interviewed, are the focus of this paper (in conjunct with a considerable amount of data from social media sites, news articles, and letters to the editor). This group saw themselves through a tolerant worldview having to deal with an out-group, referred to as “people with prejudiced attitudes” or “prejudiced people.” In this global context, the main concern of the tolerant group was “enabling a nonjudgmental environment” that is free from prejudiced oppression. More precisely, the main concern is to enable a nonjudgmental *collective* environment, wherein both minorities and tolerant attitudes are safe and free from being judged or confronted with certain sensitive issues. A collective safe space, so to speak. The way the subjects handled and resolved this concern, was through “neutralizing prejudices.” People with a tolerant worldview neutralize prejudiced attitudes as a mean to engage and deal with prejudiced oppression and prejudice-related behavior. The core variable will also be simply referred to as *neutralizing*. “Prejudices” or “prejudiced attitudes” refer in this context to “prejudiced attitudes related to minorities,” which also represented the subjects’ prevalent use of the saying. Neutralizing is a mode of behavior that people with a tolerant worldview use to assert their worldview and cope with the prejudiced attitudes they experience towards minorities and the social collective environment at large. When a tolerant worldview comes in contact with an opinion, expression or context, that is perceived prejudice, it will eliminate the prejudiced content by neutralizing it. What is being neutralized, are *the critical or negative differences between majority and minority identities that are*

*proposed by the out-group*. The notion "out-group" is referring to out-group derogation, where an out-group is perceived threatening or hindering the goals of the favored in-group to which one belongs. The notion "neutralizing" refers in general to "making something neutral," "defusing," "disqualifying," "to counterbalance or counteract the effect of something," "to render ineffective," "to negate," and "to nullify." Neutralizing prejudices is in simple terms defined as "to negate, defuse, disqualify, or override a prejudiced context by applying an opposite or contrary force or effect." Prejudiced context refers to the situations, attitudes, opinions, assertions, and accusations concerning critical, negative or hostile attitudes towards minorities, made by the out-group, "prejudiced people" (or "people with prejudiced attitudes"). Hence, prejudiced people are perceived to proclaim critical differences between majority and minorities in a segregating manner and creating an "us and them-framework." Neutralizing prejudices is a strategy for wiping out and dissolving these proposed critical differences and eliminate prejudiced attitudes and prejudiced oppression along the way.

As a basic social process (a BSPP [Glaser, 1978]), neutralizing prejudices is a process of "collective regrouping" in relation to a social and moral objective. The collective can be seen as the larger dominant societal in-group or the meta-societal in-group, the social society as a whole that one belongs to. Collective regrouping is about creating and enforcing a new, tolerant and diverse collective identity from a global framework. The process of collective regrouping integrates minorities and tolerant attitudes into the new collective and out-group's prejudices or prejudiced people out of the collective environment.

There are five sub-variables in neutralizing, which are directed at or assisting the process of neutralizing. They are (1) diagnosing, (2) reversing bias, (3) mobilizing, (4) degrouping, and (5) withdrawing. (1) *Diagnosing* refers to diagnosing the out-group's attributed vice and biases as in "diagnosing prejudices;" (2) *reversing bias* represents the engaging and argumentative part of neutralizing through rhetorically correcting and identifying the prejudices and biases that are attributed to the out-group; (3) *mobilizing* refers to how the in-group interactively is group-mobilizing in relation to the out-group; (4) *(collective) degrouping* refers to the act or process of stigmatizing and removing prejudiced people or prejudiced attitudes from the collective environment; and (5) *withdrawing* refers to the act of withdrawing from prejudiced attitudes when the psychological irritation or distress gets too overwhelming.

### **Methodology**

The research method used is classic grounded theory (CGT) (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978). It is assumed that the reader is familiar with the basics of the CGT method. CGT is an inductive conceptual method that presupposes an open approach to interview, analysis and theory building (Christiansen, 2011; Holton, 2010). The aim is to generate theory directly from data, expressed as generalized concepts. In other words, the behavior is meant to be explained and unified through generalized concepts, often written as a conclusion. The prime objective is to find a core variable that explains the main concern in a substantive area. One looks at what the subjects are most concerned with, the main concern, and the associated core variable is how they recurrently handle and resolve this main concern (Glaser, 1978). Basically, the researcher tries to generalize and organize several relevant and connected concepts that explain a certain behavior. Within this framework, there is a "center-" or core variable, which explains the

other variables and thus explains the overall behavior from a single, abstracted core perspective. Further, the core variable is branched out and explained through several sub-variables, which can also contain their own sub-sub-variables.

The GT elements that are applied in the analysis are coding, line-by-line coding, constant comparison, theoretical sampling, memoing and sorting. Fifteen subjects were interviewed for 1-2 hours. All the interviewees were Faroese, Caucasian men and woman, educated, and seemingly not a part of any general minority group (with the exception of half of the subjects being women). It should be noted that the Faroe Islands is a fairly isolated geographical area with a relatively homogenous culture. The contrast between a small, isolated, and relatively homogenous population, and the vivid character of the "global arena," gives the study a particular interesting outlook.

In addition to interviews, data has been collected from Faroese social media sites, political websites, letters to the editor, news articles and political discussions, online and offline (comprising of both civilians and politicians). The purpose of this type of data was to come closer to how the in-group is managing its out-group (which was not so directly observed through interviews), especially in relation to the rhetorical aspects of neutralizing prejudices. A few data incidences from the overall data will be used as examples for giving the reader a more nuanced illustration of the tolerant behavior.

Overall, this study has been an on-and-off analysis for the past three years, started in the fall of 2015. The first stage of this study was done in a project-collaboration with Jóna K. Thomsen (Author & Thomsen K., 2016) as part of our master's degree in Social analyses and planning at Fróðskaparsetur Føroya (University of the Faroe Islands). Concepts which arose from this project, and are further developed in this paper, are "the generalization of prejudices," "tolerance versus prejudices," "non-threatening environment" (not as a main concern), "constant comparison," "withdrawing," "global belonging," and "neutralization-logics" (the last concept is from an exam-presentation (Author & Thomsen, 2016, slide 1)).

### **Background and Basic Social Process**

The background of this GT study will be emphasized and elaborated on with the aim of giving a better understanding of the psychological, behavioral, and ideological context, that this grounded theory is situated from. The study started out by asking ordinary people "how they saw themselves in a global context?" From this question came forth a lot of perspectives and values attributed to a global context. The most prominent trait for about half of the subjects was a wish to meet global relations through tolerant values. This became a starting point for the first theoretical sampling and the study began focusing on tolerant-based behavior. Later on, after the second and third theoretical sampling, a consisting mode of relating to prejudices became apparent, namely through neutralizing prejudices. As a general trait or concept, tolerance is the capacity for, or the practice of recognizing and accepting the beliefs, identities or practices of "the other." In this study, tolerance deals with minority-issues and is taken a step further and to a certain extent becomes an end-goal in itself in relation to enabling a nonjudgmental collective environment. Subjects that exhibited a tolerant worldview placed their worldview in a global context. What was hindering a global tolerant outlook was a local out-group, "prejudiced people," which were part of the larger collective.

As a basic operation, neutralizing is the act of negating, defusing, and disqualifying attitudes and propositions that express a critical or negative difference between minorities and the majority. Neutralizing is then achieved by means of delegitimizing and de-objectivizing the out-group's attitudes and propositions. As a more general variable, neutralizing is always contextual and differentiated to a specific value-framework. There has to be a generalized contrast, opposition, or polarity from which one neutralizes. In this context, the contrast or polarity is an anti-virtue and a virtue, or the vice of the virtue. The virtue is tolerance and the vice is prejudices. The in-group is attributed a virtue and the out-group is attributed a vice. These two values are generalized in relation to each other and make a framework from which to neutralize.

Neutralizing happens in a basic social process of "collective regrouping" by means of tolerance prevailing over prejudices. In this process, minorities and tolerant people are integrated into an extended collective and prejudiced people are out-grouped from the collective. As the minority-group in a sense is a [positive] out-group which is being integrated, they are referred to as the "other-group," which is being in-grouped. "The other" also refers to something that is different from the in-group and the out-group in condition or identity.

Collective regrouping and neutralizing as a whole are far easier to conceptualize and clarify when explaining the group-dynamics from the perspective of a tolerant worldview. The tolerant outlook can be conceptualized in three parts from the perspective of a tolerant worldview: (a) the in-group generalization and polarization of vice and virtue; (b) the construction of the groups involved; and, (c) the implications and consequences of vice and virtue.

**(a) The in-group generalization and polarization of vice and virtue** can best be understood through the generalization or unification of the vice, "prejudiced attitudes." This vice is the anti-virtue of the virtue tolerance. Within the tolerant framework, when a person in the out-group is perceived as prejudiced towards one minority group, he or she is usually also expected to hold prejudice towards other minorities. Further, the notion of prejudice is almost solely used in plural form (implicit or explicit), "prejudiced people," "prejudiced attitudes," "prejudices," "to be prejudiced," "to be prejudice." In the North Germanic languages, the plural form is more obvious: "fordómar" (Faroese) or "fordomme" (Danish) is the translation of "prejudices." Further, "to be prejudiced" is more or less translated as "at vera fordómsfullur" (Faroese) or "at være fordomsfuld" (Danish) (there is a greater and clearer distinction in the North Germanic variations of the notion). In the American and English language, the noun "prejudice" is countable and uncountable, resulting in a more fluid singular and plural form. The conceptual concern here is not whether a general concept of minority-related prejudices is defined as a specific number of discrimination categories. The key is that the concept is used in a certain plural form, and consequently, encompasses at least some of the (Western) historical main discrimination areas such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation etc. Hence, the notion of "prejudiced attitudes" takes on a generalized or unified plural form, that works as a vice-related reference point for the virtue of tolerance. This does not mean, that the subjects' use of "prejudiced attitudes" as a general concept is enclosed to minorities, but rather that this minority-differentiation of the notion takes a dominant place. As a polar-value, tolerance takes

the place of a uniform virtue that integrates the in-group and grounds the ideological framework. The vice and virtue can be conceptualized as a *polar-unit*, a unit with two poles, one positive and one negative (a unit that contains *two* polarized values). The virtue is tolerance and the vice is prejudices. The polar-unit is a feature of the *polar-composition*. The polar-unit only states which polarized units are involved while the polar-composition represents how the polar-unit is composed. In other words, how the vice and virtue are arranged and constructed in relation to each other, opening up for an ideological tolerant framework. It is from the polar-composition, that neutralizing takes its impetus, its offset, its core perspective and objective. The nature of the polar-composition in this study is explained throughout the paper.

**(b) The construction of the groups involved** is explained through the polar-composition. The virtue is attributed to the in-group, "tolerant people," and the vice is attributed to the out-group, "prejudiced people." Vice and virtue are based in *dealing with minorities* or minority-related subjects. As such, "unified minorities" (the other-group) represents the third group in the ideological framework. Minorities are not necessarily seen as a single group, but the minority-approach is usually generalized through vice and virtue. Minorities are more or less experienced as an adaptable cluster of unified oppressed identities, and thus minorities *serve* as a unified focal-group. However, minorities are simultaneously a part of the in-group, but also different from the in-group. In addition, there exists a fourth group, which is partly outside of the group-framework, but is vitally relevant for the group dynamics. This is the "unenlightened group," the rest of the people, so to speak, who are not perceived to necessarily adhere to tolerant or prejudiced attitudes. This group becomes subject for accommodating tolerant values or subject for being fostered with tolerant values. Therefore, the basic ideological framework consists of a fourfold group-approach.

**(c) The implications and consequences of vice and virtue** can be illustrated through an oppressive effect and a liberating effect. Prejudiced attitudes are seen oppressive and result in states of minority-oppression and societal social segregation, meanwhile tolerance leads to non-conflict, integration, and social unity--a social unity that is made possible by enabling a nonjudgmental environment. The consequences of vice and virtue are also part of the polar-composition, as this involves the process of collective regrouping: the collective in-grouping of the other-group (integration of minorities) and the collective out-grouping of prejudiced people or prejudiced attitudes. What is further noticeable is that the concept of minorities has transnational implications. Minorities can be either local or transnational/global or both. But the prejudiced attitudes are consistently identified as local. "Local" as in national or local supranational (e.g. the Nordic countries, Europe, or the Western countries). The national aspect is however the most frequent.

Potentially, the polar-composition is able to transcend cultural and national group-limits through unification of prejudiced oppression and unification of the liberation of minorities, making the process of collective regrouping a global one. Liberation of minorities is therefore also a liberation of a social collective environment. Altogether, the polar-composition represents the in-group's construction of vice and virtue and the consequences of the overall group-dynamics.

At a more existential aspect, in its core, neutralizing is a process of collective regrouping that is connected to a sense of 'collective essence': a social transformation of

collective essence where the new essence is based on tolerance, diversity and social unity. The in-group behaves as the “modern alternative to the old conservative establishment;” It is a distancing from the establishment, a positioning-away. A form of positioning that is in a progressive state, a state not yet manifested collectively. The key aspect is that people with a tolerant worldview want to be “*free together*” with the *minorities* in a nonjudgmental (and tolerant) collective environment. As such, the nonjudgmental environment can also be seen as a global environment wherein one is safely able to connect with oneself, connecting with fellow group-members, and connecting to whatever the global collective environment has to offer. Hence, we are both dealing with a liberation of differentiated identity (minorities) and a liberation of collective identity in regard to enabling a nonjudgmental collective environment. It is this essence of combined liberation that is the source of this type of collective regrouping.

Combined (or integrative) liberation of collective identity and collective environment can interestingly be compared to Amy Russell’s (2011) grounded theory, “A Grounded Theory of Liberated Identity: Lesbians transcending oppression,” a theory which has been discovered subsequently after the conceptualization of neutralizing prejudices. Although her study is dealing with lesbian women, it is valuable to compare the concept of neutralizing with concepts such as liberated identity, verbal correcting, integrating, and being pathologized.

### **Core Variable: Neutralizing Prejudices**

As mentioned, neutralizing is to negate, defuse, disqualify, or override a prejudiced attitude or a prejudiced context by applying an opposite or contrary force or effect. When a tolerant mindset runs into an opinion, a behavior, or a situation, which is perceived prejudiced, the reaction is to neutralize the proposition, behavior, or situation through various neutralizing behaviors, e.g. through *relativizing differences* or *degroupping*. These are described in the upcoming sections. Neutralizing prejudices is a basic social process in the (collective) strategy family (Glaser, 1978). As a strategy, its goal is to resolve the main concern, enabling a nonjudgmental environment, and work towards a tolerant society. The concept of “attitudes” refers here to the ABC model of attitudes, including affective, behavioral, and cognitive aspects (Jain, 2014). The following data illustration is a case where neutralizing takes the form of a counter-argument in an ongoing public debate.

#### **Male A** (from a letter to the editor):

It makes no sense to hold on to, that this case is not about discrimination. . . . In debates about discrimination and human rights it has been common for a long time to distinguish between direct and indirect discrimination. . . . Direct discrimination is, plain and simple, when the same rules do not apply for everyone.

Indirect discrimination is on the other hand when the same rules apply to everyone, but the rules cause, that some people are worse off than others.

In the aforementioned argument, the author of the letter is responding to a prejudice context and is trying to neutralize prejudiced attitudes through edifying the public on some of the different types of discrimination.

Since the conceptualization of the core variable, two main versions of neutralization have subsequently been identified in the sphere of social science. The

most prevalent version of neutralization is primarily found in criminology (Sykes & Matza, 1957). It is about excusing and justifying an immoral or criminal act, e.g. to say that the victim, one is stealing from, deserved it or that the victim did not suffer from the theft. Another example of neutralization is found in Diane Beeson's master thesis "Women in Karate: Neutralization of Sex Roles" from 1973 (Glaser, 1978). In this thesis, a group of women use karate as a mean for the neutralization of sex-differences. This latter use of neutralization has a familiarity to the core variable of this paper. In the process of neutralizing prejudices, there is always an underlying or concurrent element of *dissolving or wiping out propositions and attitudes which state critical or negative differences* between majority and minority/minorities. These are critical or negative differences that are proposed by the out-group. That is, when a person with prejudiced attitudes criticizes a minority group, a minority behavior, or a minority condition, and proposes that the minority-group *differs* from the majority in a critical or negative manner. What follows, is that the tolerant attitude will usually attempt to enforce the message, that there are no critical or negative differences between the majority and the minority, and thereby dissolving any proposed critical or negative differences. A prejudiced attitude, in a tolerant context, is namely constituted by making a critical or negative *judgment* about how a minority differs from the majority. It is the proposed critical or negative difference that is being neutralized, thereby enabling and retaining a nonjudgmental environment. Therefore, neutralizing prejudices is a way to seek social union and equality between majority and minorities through enabling a nonjudgmental environment. Being part of a nonjudgmental environment is illustrated in the data incident below.

**Female A** (interviewee):

It is so wonderful at my workplace. We are all a little bit alike . . . a little left-wing with the same opinions . . . It's a place where you're not being judged and don't have to be on your guard and think all the time . . . .

**Interviewer:**

Did you say, "not being judged"?

**Female A:**

Yes, especially that, that you're not being judged . . . .

**Male B** (interviewee):

It's not so much about women's rights per se, it's more about bringing forth more tolerance, I want to make it [this society] more tolerant.

When a nonjudgmental environment has become enabled or stays enabled, it is then possible to connect with oneself, to connect with others and to connect to the collective environment itself – enabling as a condition for connecting.

**Male C** (interviewee, talking about the tolerant community):

People got dreams about the Faroe Islands. A common denominator is to connect with the outside world . . . . Religion and all that is on an individual basis. People don't talk about the big questions because it creates division. One downplays certain subjects, they create division, and one doesn't want to be part of it. I think it's great. In that way it is possible to be harmonious within the group.

As a more general rhetorical requisite, neutralizing can be seen as a basic component in constructing arguments. One often negates and disqualifies when building counterarguments; one identifies an incorrect argument from the counterpart, categorizes the vice and bias, and then constructs a counterargument that involves some form of virtuous pattern. Neutralizing prejudices on the other hand differs from the simple act of "negating something" which generally is more of a neutral notion. Neutralizing has both a *negating* aspect and a *disqualifying* aspect due to its value-laden emotional charge. In other words, a tolerant mindset that is presented with prejudiced attitudes will usually be inflicted with worrying, irritation, or psychological distress and react by neutralizing the prejudiced attitude or prejudiced context.

There are two layers to neutralizing. It is an act *and* a process. As an act, neutralizing takes various forms in the present, both in social and private settings ("private" as in individual, alone). This can for example happen in discussions, dialogues or in a private reflecting seclusion. When prejudiced attitudes are observed, they are always linked to some kind of information in the form of a statement, subject, opinion, or emotional/symbolic expression. Therefore, a great deal of neutralizing prejudices is about neutralizing prejudiced attitudes and prejudiced propositions, making neutralizing, in a broad sense, mainly a rhetorical activity.

As a process, neutralizing is about a greater goal: to neutralize prejudices and uplift minorities from prejudiced oppression into a new integrated collective constituted by equality, diversity, and social union. Technically speaking, the goal is to dissolve a perceived identity-hierarchy of the "oppressor versus the oppressed" and "judging versus being judged." The top of the hierarchy is represented by non-minorities and is upheld by the oppressor, represented by prejudiced people and prejudice behavior. The bottom of the hierarchy is represented by the oppressed minorities. Hence, the immediate acts and behavior of neutralizing prejudices serve the greater goal (or process) of neutralizing prejudices from the overall societal condition.

It is worth noting, that the main concern could also be conceptualized as "enabling a *tolerant* environment." The reason for choosing the concept "a nonjudgmental environment" is because the core variable is focusing on out-group management and not on the behavior of the in-group in general. A nonjudgmental environment is more associated with "not being judged," while a tolerant environment could be said to be much more than that, for example through proactively helping people or through being part of a tolerant ecosphere. The out-group is perceived to judge and to be condemning, and it is this aspect which comes into the forefront of the main concern in this paper (as in "if you're not being tolerant, then at least be nonjudgmental or silent"). While a main concern of the tolerant behavior is to enable a tolerant environment, a precondition for that concern is to enable a nonjudgmental environment. Hence, a nonjudgmental environment is one of the primary conditions for a tolerant environment, especially in dealing with the out-group.

### **Properties of Neutralizing**

There are four properties to neutralizing: (1) polar-composing, (2) framing prejudices, (3) resiling, and (4) inverting protective instinct.

**Polar-composing.** A prerequisite for neutralizing is the use of a stereotype. The stereotype is “prejudiced people,” or “prejudiced attitudes.” In here the polar-composition of vice and virtue comes into play as explained in the background-section. One must neutralize against something--a set of perceived faulty beliefs and oppressive attitudes. As the generalization of vice is constructed as a general concept for prejudiced people or prejudiced attitudes, one is able to neutralize against the vice from a virtuous standpoint, namely from a tolerant attitude. Hence, vice and virtue are generalized, polarized and unified into a polar-composition: “tolerance and prejudices.”

**Framing prejudices.** *Framing prejudices* is the continuing process of identifying, defining, constructing, and structuring prejudiced attitudes and prejudiced content in relation to tolerant aspects. The term is borrowed from framing theory (Arowolo, 2017), and includes framing in mind and framing in communication. There are two main elements in framing a prejudiced attitude: vice and bias. Vice represents the moral and emotional aspect of the prejudice meanwhile bias represents more of the faulty logic and information in the prejudiced content (a bias can of course also involve aspects of a vice and vice versa). Hence, the framing of prejudices can be said to include an ethical aspect and a more logical aspect, which usually are intertwined and almost entangled in the framing of prejudices. Framing prejudices can happen explicitly and implicitly. Explicitly, the framing of prejudices is directly communicated. Implicitly, the framing of prejudices is not communicated directly, but is implied, insinuated, or hidden. The term hidden refers to the time when the neutralizing message is communicated in a way that can show the receiver a prejudiced content without giving the impression of the framing intention.

Framing theory obviously encompasses more dimensions than expressed in this section, but the main point is that framing prejudices in general is both connected to perceptions of vice and to perceptions of biases, which together grounds a “whole prejudice” for further framing. Overall, most of the behavior involved in neutralizing prejudices should be seen in a framing context.

**Resiling.** *Resiling* comes from the word “resile” meaning “to spring back; rebound; resume the original form or position, as an elastic body” (Dictionary.com, 2017). When a tolerant worldview is inflicted with a prejudiced attitude, irritation or psychological distress is generated. When neutralization is carried out, psychological distress is reduced, and relief takes place. Further, resiling also includes resiling back into a nonjudgmental (or tolerant) atmosphere. Resiling to the original tolerant framework does not necessarily mean that nothing has changed. Resiling is a form of adaptation, where the neutralized prejudiced content is processed and adjusted to a continuous tolerant outlook. Any informational or opinionated content that is incongruent with a tolerant attitude can be ignored, adapted or incorporated, as long as the basic nature of the polar-composition stays intact.

**Inversing protective instinct.** In defining what inversing protective instinct is, it is sensible to first define what protective instinct means in this context. Protective instinct refers here to a ‘basic collective protective instinct.’ A ‘basic protective instinct’ refers here to protecting something from something else as in “protecting us from them” in an “us and them”-dynamic. Thus, one is limiting an outside influence or creating a border to uphold a segregation of “us and them.” A border can be physical, cognitive and/or discursive. “Collective” refers to the “us”-part as a collective rather than a family-

-or a smaller group-unit for example. In general, and historically speaking, the prime collective identity is either national or supranational, the latter encompassing certain neighboring countries with integrated interests. The prime collective is therefore usually anchored in a geographical context. Hence, a basic collective protective instinct creates an "us and them"-dynamic in a collective defensive outlook. As mentioned, it is here referred to as a general "protective instinct."

Inversing protective instinct is about flipping the general framework: "protecting them from us," as in protecting minorities from the majority. In unifying minorities, a tolerant outlook encompasses local identities and transnational identities, anchoring prejudiced people or prejudiced attitudes in a local context and placing tolerant people and minorities in a local and a global context. Minorities represents something that is in a different condition or different identity from the majority, and thus one is trying to protect something that is part of another group in the process of regrouping to a larger diverse collective. One is caring for and protecting "the other." Inversing protective instinct is a form of detachment from a basic collective protective instinct to a more "caregiving collective protective instinct." Caregiving, as in caring for "the other," involves caring, sacrificing, restraining, or opening oneself and fellow others.

### **Dimensions of Neutralizing**

Neutralizing prejudices has three dimensions: (1) communicative charge, (2) metamorphing, and (3) collective and individual communication.

**Communicative Charge.** Most of the behavior in neutralizing is communicative and takes various forms of communication. The most prominent communication styles are "aggressive," "rational," "diplomatic," and "pedagogic." These four styles shall be seen in a dimension of an emotional and communicative charge. From aggressive to rational to diplomatic to pedagogic. The *aggressive style* is offensive and is usually carried out in an accusing manner and can be highly charged with emotions. The *rational style* is usually more detached and usually conveys arguments based on principles, with the purpose of letting people know where one stands. Rational is often the least engaging aspect of the four. The *pedagogic style* is in a sense the opposite of the aggressive style, and is *reaching out* to prejudiced people, tolerant people and the unenlightened group in an attempt to foster understanding and acceptance of minorities --usually through presenting minority-related perspectives or a broader human perspective. The pedagogic style can also reach out to minorities and express sympathy, empathy, or inclusiveness. The *diplomatic style* behaves in an advocating manner. It takes fewer risks, but is usually more effective, due to its semi-detachment and use of prudence and situational awareness. This style can also adapt and make use of the three other styles or compose a blend of them. Additionally, there is a fifth prominent style named "trendy," which can be incorporated in all the other styles, and thereby framing neutralization in a more popular and contemporary manner.

**Metamorphing.** *Metamorphing* represents the dimension from *morphing* to *metamorphosing*. This dimension essentially represents the degree of collective regrouping. The basic social process of collective regrouping has two prominent modes, namely morphing and metamorphosing. Morphing refers to when neutralizing is more rule- or principle-based (as for example in the previously-mentioned rational style). In this scenario, a mindset that is morphing is not directly identifying with minorities as a

larger collective but is rather stating principles of for example individual freedom or individual wellbeing, and thereby not intruding on other groups or not holding prejudice in general. The main concern though is about the same: the concern for enabling a nonjudgmental environment (although the participation in the nonjudgmental environment is less "organic" in morphing and is rather based on proper civil conduct).

Metamorphosing on the other hand is an attempt to integrate minorities and majority into a new and larger tolerant collective environment. Ideologically speaking, metamorphosing is a more emotionally invested concept. Hence, metamorphosing is a conjoined social concept for the interconnected and sometimes interchangeable behavior between morphing and metamorphosing. Some tolerant behaviors can shift from morphing to metamorphosing and some tolerant behaviors usually stay in one of these conditions. Further, metamorphosing also represents the fluent discursive structure and the diversified interactive behavior that happens between these two modes of collective regrouping. In other words, an in-group can collectively regroup in a stronger and more fluent mode if the members can be affiliated through either emotional attachment (metamorphosing) and/or principled or rule-based attachment (morphing). Therefore, the concept of metamorphosing can also be categorized as a social structural process ("xSSP") (Glaser, 1978, p. 102).

**Collective and individual communication.** "A tolerant behavior can either be characterized by an individual communication (a person who speaks on behalf of him- or herself), or by a social voice, representing the larger in-group." Communicating with a social voice usually involves an implicit tone of communicating in third person, as in communicating on behalf of the in-group, on behalf of the majority or on behalf of the minorities. Further, it is also possible to represent abstract concepts in the communication, e.g. to portray or personify tolerant or prejudiced attitudes. The communication is usually geared in such a way that a member of the in-group implicitly speaks for and with the in-group—including when a member of the in-group is speaking to or addressing one of the three other groups (see the second paragraph in the section on "Background and Basic Social Process").

In this study, the core variable is tightly connected to an ideological framework and is carried out through a broad category of behaviors. The sub-variables of neutralizing in the coming sections are very versatile and shall be seen in a highly interconnected manner. Two of the sub-variables are more comprehensive than the other three. These are "Reversing bias" and "Mobilizing," which have their own sub-sub-variables.

### **Diagnosing**

The term *diagnosing* represents the more analytical behavior of neutralizing. Diagnosing refers to diagnosing prejudiced attitudes or diagnosing vice and biases in relation to (a) the out-group, (b) the unenlightened group, (c) the in-group, or (d) oneself. Diagnosing can also happen in conjunct with analyzing how prejudices affect minorities. As tolerance is the reference point of prejudices, tolerant aspects can also be researched in this context. The term "diagnosing" indicates dealing with a pathology. In this case, it is a psychological pathology of attitude connected with vices, biases, and prejudices. Diagnosing is a frequent activity which is included in almost all kind of neutralizing. Basically, all the analytical behavior in neutralizing requires diagnosing,

including subconscious analytical behavior. It takes diagnosing to reverse a bias, to mobilize, to degroup, and to withdraw. Diagnosing can happen whenever there is a need for it, including in social settings. Although diagnosing is generally about analyzing, reflecting, and introspecting on prejudiced contexts, there are four properties which often take place in the diagnostic activity: (a) *self-diagnosing*, (b) *gathering information*, (c) *pathologizing*, and (d) *prescribing*.

(a) In general, as prejudiced attitudes are a tolerant concern, **self-diagnosing** comes into play; checking and exploring oneself for potential prejudices in the aim of becoming more tolerant, introspective, and aware are required especially in relation to detecting unconscious reasoning patterns that can cause a person to take his or her privileged aspects for granted.

(b) **Gathering information** is about seeking and collecting information and knowledge on aspects of tolerance and prejudices in the aim of neutralizing prejudices. Gathering information can, for example, happen through directly analyzing group-behavior or through researching informational content.

(c) **Pathologizing** refers to determining the nature and cause of a prejudice condition. When a tolerant worldview comes in contact with a perceived prejudice, it can determine the nature and cause of the prejudice through analyzing and classifying it. The prominent perceived causes of prejudiced attitudes are (1) resentment, (2) domination/power, (3) fear, (4) ignorance, or (5) a lack of understanding. These causes are predominantly attributed to a lack of postmodern intellectual edification.

**Female B** (interviewee):

I don't like prejudices towards different kinds of human beings. I must get involved when debates get too condemning. It affects me to be part of for example the debate on refugees. I think that I should be better updated, and it provokes me that I must see pictures of dead people to really react. And that is what it takes to get other people to react. Now I feel, that I must have an opinion and defend them against prejudices. One feels that people are afraid of the unknown.

(d) **Prescribing** refers to resolving a cure for a prejudiced attitude. Prescribing usually takes a starting point from former classified pathological causes in one's recollection. That is, former types of prejudiced attitudes that a tolerant mindset has specified, categorized and classified in their "library of prejudices." When a prescription is made for a specific prejudice or for prejudices in general, it is ready for use in for example reversing a bias, mobilizing, or degrouping.

### **Reversing Bias**

Reversing Bias is the most dominant behavior in neutralizing. It represents the engaging and argumentative part of neutralizing. This happens through rhetorically correcting, modifying, or showing the out-group's attributed bias or biases. Reversing bias is about taking the validity out of the counterpart's argument, attitude, or discourse, by means of identifying and pointing out the counterpart's biases. In other words, focusing on the counterpart's vice and biases and counteracting through pointing them out and reversing them, results in correcting a bias or at least revealing or diffusing it. In addition, reversing a bias can also happen in conjunct with self-diagnosing. Reversing bias is a

communicative variable and is essentially a free variable due to that it is argumentative and rhetorical in nature; every rhetorical aspect which can be used in reversing a bias becomes relevant. Nevertheless, there are sub-sub-variables that are quite dominant. These are (a) addressing, (b) relativizing, (c) incompatibilizing, (d) logical formations, (e) constant comparison, (f) advocating, and (g) critical questioning.

### **Addressing**

*Addressing* prejudices is a frame-opening variable that is frequent and significant. Addressing refers to the *identification of prejudicial aspects and pointing them out* in a social setting. The properties of addressing are "identification of prejudices" and "pointing out prejudices." The behavior of addressing works as a premise for the entrance of other communicative aspects of neutralizing, thereby opening and framing the tolerant and prejudicial, communicative context.

### **Relativizing**

*Relativizing* is to make an argument relative and inapplicable. Relativizing deals with taking the validity out of an argument from the out-group. For example, when a person from the out-group is perceived to *enforce* and praise the values, identity, or behavior of the "current conservative establishment," a tolerant mindset can relativize the argument by uttering "that applies to everyone" or "that applies to no one." Technically speaking, relativizing is about negating a proposed *singular essence* and breaking down the foundation of that essence. A singular essence refers to something being special in relation to something else. A frequent example of relativizing is: "Women and men (or homosexuals and heterosexuals, Arab and Western cultures/ethnicities) are the same, they are just social constructions born in different environments." This is one example of relativizing through negating nature and promoting nurture. The purpose is to wipe out proposed critical or negative differences through relativizing them. A general in-group-consensus is that understanding individual, social, and societal relativity in an academic postmodern manner is a precondition to being self-conscious about various biases. There is more complexity to the variable relativizing that partly is elaborated on in the sub-sub-variable "logical formations." The following data illustrate one of the common types of relativizing. In this case, it is used in connection with mental illness.

**Female C** (from a letter to the editor):

Mental diseases and physical diseases should be prioritized in the same way, because they affect the individual, relatives, and society in the same manner.

### **Incompatibilizing**

*Incompatibilizing* is about taking a counterargument and making it incompatible to general reasoning or to today's modern societal context. There are two aspects to incompatibilizing. The first one is to push forward, that a counterargument is invalid in relation to a better rhetorical framework, e.g. "you can't differentiate people like that," or "the goal of integration is not assimilation but is about inclusion." The latter form of incompatibilizing is about validating what is relevant for a modern societal context, e.g. today's modern society is about diversity and tolerance and not about tradition and creating boundaries. Hence, *incompatibilizing* is about making an argument invalid, either through the argument itself or in relation to what contemporary society should be about.

**Male B** (from a letter to the editor):

It should be unnecessary to talk about this in 2015, but so long as marriage does not include us all, we will continue [with the cause.]

## Logical Formations

*Logical formations* represent the underlying logics, or logical patterns, that have evolved to dominant theoretical formulas used in a wide variety of arguments. It can also be understood as the theoretical backgrounds or basic theoretical structure of various neutralizing arguments (it can also be viewed as theoretical codes as in CGT). The logical formations in neutralizing are termed *neutralization-logics* (the first four neutralization-logics are found in Author & Thomsen K., 2016, slide 1). There is obviously a great deal of other applied neutralization-logics in neutralizing prejudices, but these are some of the most common.

**Neutralization-logic 1: The non-generalization rule.** *The non-generalization rule* is a generalized rule to "not to generalize." A sort of all-or-nothing logic. More precisely, the rule is "not to make negative or critical generalizations about minorities." This is observed when a minority-group is criticized, and the tolerant

response is "you can't generalize" or more implicit "that's a generalization." A negative or critical generalization is wrong in itself. The rule has a dimension of three premises that can be applied and can also overlap: (a) The first premise is a generalized statistically distributed perspective on groups in general, wherein one group has about the same behavioral distribution as another group. For example, in proposing that Arab and Western cultures are identical with the same proportion of "normal people" and the same proportion of "extremists," metaphorically illustrated in Figure 1 (95 % presenting "normal people" and 5 % presenting "extremists").

(b) The second premise is that people, groups and group-traits are so diverse, that they are impossible to generalize. Or, that people cannot be reduced to generalizations. (c) The last premise is that people, groups and the world in general, is too complex for humans to generalize. Hence, what happens in this category is a form of group- or cultural standardization in relation to distributed behavior and identity, usually applied in relativizing a counter-argument. Thus, this generalization is about group-behavioral-standardization by means of similarity *or* by means of diversity/complexity.

**Neutralization-logic 2: Cancelling out.** *Cancelling out* is based on the group-generalization in the first neutralization-logic. When a minority group, members of a minority group, or traits of a minority group are being criticized, one makes a negative comparison of the majority and defuses the counter-argument and cancels it out. For

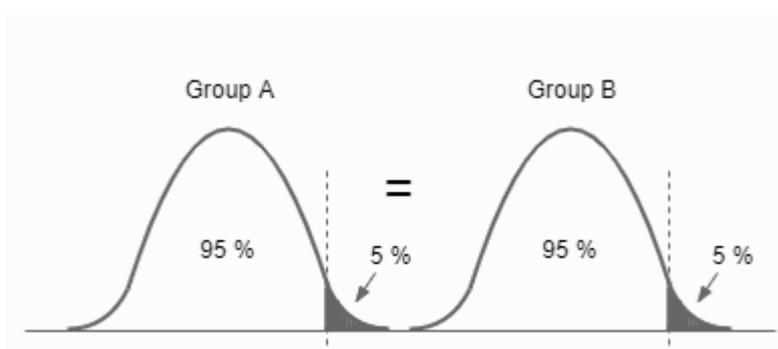


Figure 1: Group-generalization by group-distribution (the figure is inspired from the project, "The Polarized field of Reversed Bias" (Author & Thomsen K., 2016, slide 1))

example, "there is no guarantee that heterosexual couples are good parents," cancelling out a critique regarding homosexual's biological situation in relation to adopting children.

**Neutralization-logic 3: Source rejection.** *Source rejection* is about discrediting and rejecting a critical information-source regarding minority-related issues, potentially without any review. It can happen in two ways. The source is either rejected on the basis that the source itself is perceived prejudice (by content, author, website, organization etc.) or the person sharing the source is perceived prejudice. Source rejection is frequently observed on social media sites.

**Neutralization-logic 4: Sensitive treatment.** The fourth neutralization-logic is about treating a minority or treating minorities different from the majority in a sensitive way. This can happen in two ways. (a) Reacting relatively mildly when worrying, unethical, offensive, or criminal behavior is observed with an individual member or members of a minority group, due to a wish to avoid expressing critical concerns. (b) Giving minorities special treatment in general because they are in an oppressed state. Sensitive treatment also shows how neutralizing can be intended to level up minorities with the aim of equalizing the positions of the minorities to the majority.

**Neutralization-logic 5: Collective defusing.** *Collective defusing* is about reducing an expected aggressive escalation or a fearful escalation in social opinions. This preventative action is about downplaying the importance of a specific event or new information. This can, for example, be a news-thread that is being distributed on social media sites, wherein someone tries to calm other people down by downplaying the importance or the intensity of a certain event that potentially can get people geared up. Collective defusing usually happens through phrases like "aren't all groups extreme in some areas" or "well, there are probably many aspects to this story, which are excluded." Like many other of the variables, collective defusing can happen in a multitude of ways, source rejection being one of them.

### **Constant Comparison**

The constant comparison method in grounded theory deals with constantly comparing codes and categories in order to reach an end result, the core variable (Holton, 2010). In this study, constant comparison is primarily defined as an academic, habitual pattern for relativistic reasoning. It is the tendency to compare a subject constantly to another subject or idea. In general, this basic reasoning pattern deals with getting different angles on a perspective to expand and nuance the perspective. In neutralizing, the goal of constant comparison is to relativize or delegitimize a critical counter-perspective or counter-proposition. For example, if a critique of a minority issue takes place, the process of constant comparison starts comparing all sorts of different perspectives in the aim of neutralizing the critique, mainly through relativizing or cancelling out the counter-proposition.

### **Advocating**

*Advocating* for tolerant values shall be understood as pleading and arguing for the case of another group while at the same time promoting one's own in-group through the tolerant worldview. There are two properties of advocating: "confessing virtue" and "inclusioning." Confessing virtue is about showing and exposing one's innermost values and communicating them to members of the in-group and to members outside of the in-

group. Inclusioning (also found in Michal Lysek's [2016] grounded theory on "Collective Inclusioning") deals with advocating for diversifying and broadening the larger collective, and thereby making room for minority identities. Recurrent inclusioning can also be viewed as a way to broaden and consolidate the new collective environment. The dimensions of advocating are similar to the dimension of the communicative style of neutralizing. They vary from "assertive" to "reaching out." Advocating for tolerant values can be shown in an assertive way and can also be communicated in a manner of reaching out. The latter of these two is often carried out in a vulnerable or pedagogic manner that exhibits sympathy, empathy, and identification with minorities. Beside from gaining *virtuous recognition* from the in-group (see the section on "Mobilizing"), reaching out is done with the purpose of reaching across social constructed barriers and touching "the other" and hopefully reaching prejudiced people and the un-enlightened.

### **Critical Questioning**

*Critical questioning* is about asking critical or tough questions to a counterpart which is either a member of the unenlightened group or a member of the out-group. These critical questions are framed from a tolerant outlook, asserting subjects of tolerance and prejudices. Critical questioning can happen in several ways, e.g. in an offensive manner (somehow interrogating), in a defensive manner, in a diagnosing manner, or in a diplomatic manner. In addition, the pedagogic aspect of critical questioning is often characterized by open critical questions.

As was stated in the introduction to this sub-variable, reversing bias is essentially a free variable due that it is argumentative. Hence, if the context is for it, any number of the other sub-variables can be used in reversing a bias, including the variable *withdrawing* (see the section on "Withdrawing").

### **Mobilizing**

*Mobilizing* refers to how the in-group interactively is group-mobilizing against the out-group. This happens through stepping in formation, expanding, and advancing the group members and the group agenda. Stepping in formation also includes the organization of information flow around the in-group. Collective regrouping is closely connected to mobilizing. Although collective regrouping is present in all the neutralizing behavior, it can take a more explicit form in mobilizing, where the in-group dynamic can happen at a more group-conscious level. The sub-sub-variables are (a) briefing, (b) fostering, (c) role aligning, (d) virtuous recognition, (e) institutionalizing, and (f) expanding the tolerant field.

### **Briefing**

*Briefing* refers to updating, informing, conforming, and edifying fellow group members in line with a tolerant framework. The subjects span across general opinion, social studies, understanding prejudices, argumentative aspects and tactics, recent updates in the news or local happenings etc. It is about keeping in-group-members edified, skilled, presentable, and up to date with the current societal context of tolerance and prejudices.

### **Fostering**

*Fostering* is about gaining new in-group members and further edifying existing members. Fostering new members can for example happen through advocating for compassion,

having solidarity, having community, belonging, achieving status, having intellectual edification, or respecting a collective safe space. The aim is to intellectualize citizens who lack intellectual edification and who are ignorant to prejudiced oppression. The focus is primarily on the unenlightened group but can also include reaching out to the out-group. Fostering in-group members can also take place and is different from briefing, which is more associated with informational content (wherein fostering is more edifying). The following data example illustrates how fostering can take place in a friendly in-group-setting, in this case conveying and teaching each other to gain perspective from new angles.

**Female B** (interviewee):

I adapt to how certain groups of people are. But I have my own groups where I talk more about conditions in the world. How one can see things from the outside, from the inside, and from different angles. I don't talk about certain things in certain groups, because people are so fundamentally different from another [there is no purpose to it.]

### **Role Aligning**

*Role aligning* is the inclination to position oneself relative to one's in-group, filling one's part in the larger group-perspective. This can be done in any number of ways. It can happen through public engagement, organizational support, engaging in discussions, learning, observing, storytelling etc. The intensity does also vary. For example, focusing on the most important aspect of manifesting a tolerant environment, making a small effort, that is "satisfying enough," or personifying the virtue and living it. The key in role aligning is that one sees one's tolerant profile in a larger framework of virtuous duty, virtuous belonging, virtuous being, and/or virtuous expansion.

### **Virtuous Recognition**

*Virtuous recognition* plays a significant role in mobilizing and in the overall in-group-dynamic. Virtuous recognition comes from tolerant peers, whether they belong to a minority group or not. The closer one is to the virtue of tolerance and the tolerant environment, the better potential for virtuous recognition. Further, the higher virtuous recognition, the more one is potentially able to influence and steer the course of mobilizing. Virtuous recognition can for example be attained through (a) one's level of tolerant understanding, (b) one's effort, (c) one's level of empathy for or articulation of minority perspectives, (d) one's level of assertiveness, (e) one's level of creativity in virtuous understanding etc. In principle, virtuous recognition is everything that is worth giving virtuous recognition and everything that is worth attaining virtuous recognition.

### **Institutionalizing**

*Institutionalizing* is about neutralizing prejudices through institutional means. The use of institutional means can happen, for example, in the process of legislating minority protection or instilling tolerant values into the values of an organization, formally or informally. Institutionalizing can basically happen in every institutional or organizational setting and is about establishing a deeper and stronger tolerant order, overriding the old order.

## Expanding the Tolerant Field

*Expanding the tolerant field* has to do with taking tolerance in new directions. This is primarily done through new areas of tolerant experience, new areas of prejudiced oppression and new areas for using one's skills and interests for tolerant expression. An element of *trending* is usually involved, accommodating the tolerant expansion. Expanding the tolerant field opens up for new tolerant areas for oneself and others.

## Degrouping

Degrouping means to remove a member from a group. In this case, (collective) degrouping means removal of prejudiced members (or prejudiced attitudes) from the collective environment. Degrouping is meant in an active sense, as the continuing removal of prejudiced people or prejudiced behavior from the collective environment. Degrouping is a form of collective out-grouping of an established societal group in society, in this case a part of the majority. The word "degrouping" is also meant to signify a form of collective clique behavior. However, degrouping in neutralizing can both be associated with degrouping prejudiced people and with degrouping prejudiced attitudes or behaviors. In the latter case, attitudes themselves are being degrouped from the collective environment, meaning that attitude management and rhetorical management are part of the degrouping.

Accusation and stereotyping are the main drivers of the degrouping behavior. The properties of degrouping are (a) stereotyping, (b) condemning, (c) stigmatizing, and (d) smearing.

(a) As previously mentioned, neutralizing requires a polar-composition (tolerance versus prejudices). One who discredits or displays negative or critical attitudes towards one minority, or a subject where a minority identity is involved, is usually perceived inclined to resent or oppose minority-identities in general. **Stereotyping** happens through generalizing prejudiced attitudes and attributing this unified vice to the out-group and its members. Hence, this type of stereotyping is about generalizing and simplifying the concept of prejudiced attitudes in relation to prejudiced oppression and a range of minority issues. A property of stereotyping is labelling. Labels can for example be "prejudiced people," "bigots," "country folks," "being biased," "being entitled," "white males," "Nazis," "racists," "being narrow-minded," and so on.

(b) **Condemning** is simply the in-group's behavior of condemning the out-group. The dimension of condemning is from "ignoring" to "resentment" to "strong condemnation." Ignoring is the least charged aspect and happens when one is not taking another person seriously and will rather just ignore him, either mildly or directly. Ignoring can also be less condemning and be more based in critical judgment. In the middle of the dimension is resentment, from mild to strong resentment. Strong condemnation is at the other end of the spectrum and represents when there are wishes to outcast prejudiced people from society, send them to jail, or for example exposing them publicly and so on (based on data from social media sites). Condemning can also be extended to accusing and installing feelings of guilt in the out-group.

(c) **Stigmatizing** deals with disgracing the out-group and thereby degroups them from the larger collective. Disgracing is used in the sense of making them social undesirables and misfits for a tolerant society.

(d) **Smearing** the out-group and its members happens within the in-group and in interaction with the out-group and the unenlightened group. Smearing can happen in all social settings, for example in public contexts or in a friendly come-together. Smearing can also for example be characterized by mockery or ridicule which can happen in any number of ways, e.g. labeling or critical questioning.

### **Withdrawing**

*Withdrawing* refers to the act of withdrawing from prejudiced attitudes when irritation or the psychological distress gets too overwhelming. That is, when a tolerant person experiences too high a dosage of prejudices. Withdrawing entails a variety of behaviors in removing oneself (and sometimes others) from a prejudiced environment or from prejudiced people. This can both happen in a social context for a small period of seconds or minutes and can also happen in the context of a longer period where prejudiced attitudes are avoided altogether. The properties are (a) *shutting off*, (b) *getting offended*, (c) *avoiding*, and (d) *recovering*.

(a) **Shutting off** is when one closes oneself off from the immediate environment. How one shuts off is generally in connection with the environment; logging off social media, leaving an assembly or just ignoring or mentally withdrawing from what is going on in a social setting. Shutting off is frequently accommodated by *getting offended*. The following data example illustrates how one can be motivated to withdraw from the immediate environment.

**Female A** (interviewee):

It makes me so mad. Why does she have to enforce herself onto her and have an opinion about her [opinion about a coworker.] Now it's like a new thing comes in over, it disturbs, now everybody must talk about that for a period [and take care of it.]

(b) **Getting offended** is a reaction to prejudiced transgression of some type and can involve getting hurt and upset. On the one hand, getting offended is caused by the fact that one is sympathizing with minorities. On the other hand, getting offended is about an intrusion in one's nonjudgmental or tolerant environment.

(c) **Avoiding** a prejudiced environment happens after withdrawal as a mode of gaining breath again or regaining emotional stability. Emotional instability is meant in a milder and broader sense, encompassing frustration, depressing states, lack of energy, hopelessness, irritation, and anger among others. Avoiding prejudices can also take place as a proactive behavior, avoiding all or certain prejudiced environments in general or for a while.

(d) **Recovering** is the stage of withdrawing where one has gained emotional stability or has taken a required timeout. When recovering is adequate or complete, one is ready to engage in progressive tolerant-related contexts again. A frequent aspect of recovery is the process of diagnosing prejudices and gaining a better perspective. Recovering can happen after seconds, minutes, days, or periods.

## Reflection and Further Research

Neutralizing, as a basic social process, entails disciplines such as rhetoric, social psychological group-dynamics, and political ideology. As a result, the interdisciplinary aspect treads in the forefront and can potentially become a subject for further research.

A broader and more nuanced framework of different forms of neutralizing may create a deeper picture of rhetorical aspects and expand the rhetorical awareness in relation to ideological currents. The behavior in different forms of neutralizing will probably always stereotype through some form of polar-composition. Knowing these polar-compositions and how they are generalized, unified, and polarized can be a good rhetorical instrument in closing in on the other's perspective.

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