

OUR WHY STATEMENT

We all bring many different identities and experiences to our co-op and our community. Our differences come in a variety of ways: country of origin, ethnicity, religious identity/affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical ability, socioeconomic status, and age. Indeed, we are all multifaceted yet society does not recognize this complexity.

To avoid discomfort, we sometimes avoid talking about our differences or we categorize others in overly simplistic terms. This causes people to feel and be excluded. For some, the exclusion is constant. It happens at every intersection, is written in policies, is part of our contracts, and is the result of bias and stereotyping.

If exclusion happens in our community, it happens in our store. It involves micro-aggressions, assumptions and perceived differences that cause many to not feel a part of any community. In order to feel accepted some people feel the need to code-switch and be inauthentic. In the end this creates volatility - environments of distrust, anger and hate, feelings of inclusion or exclusion. We all want to experience inclusion where our uniqueness and our authentic selves are valued.

Change happens when we invite difficult conversations; when we recognize our common goals and interests and can see that our differences make us better.

Change happens when cooperation & collaboration are the norm instead of competition or ill-informed debate. And, of course, change happens when we show respect, help others succeed, and unconditionally support each other.

**We invite all to participate in building an inclusive,
equitable and just cooperative society!**



OUR WHAT STATEMENT

It is difficult to hold a space of non-judgment and non-assumption. The Co-op's Equity and Justice Committee works to educate and empower our community with skills to make unseen injustices known. We meet to discuss and implement how to improve the Co-op's responsiveness as an employer and as a community institution, and to respond to individual experiences of marginalization within the workplace. We strive to create mutual understanding by enhancing our awareness of unconscious bias. By modeling, actively listening to others, addressing microaggressions, and challenging our own assumptions, we create an environment that fosters multicultural involvement, builds trust, and creates security for those who feel unsafe.

