

stereotype (n) :

Widely held but oversimplified image of a particular group. They can be positive, negative or neutral. Stereotypes can cause people to exaggerate differences between groups, either by falsely seeing them as homogeneous or by focusing only on differences.

CHANDLER: ACTING AGAINST STEREOTYPES

Before you watch

1

Chandler talks about how one comment made her think about the stereotypes associated with African American people.

What kinds of things do you think she will mention in the interview? Discuss in pairs.

Chandler



While you watch

2

Discuss if any of your ideas in 1 coincide with what Chandler says.

3

Watch the video again. Circle the things that Chandler mentions.

- a Some people think that African Americans are *only good at sports / not intelligent*.
- b Being part of *a panel discussion / an academic conference* was a deliberate decision that Chandler took.
- c She knows that her presence there could be *unexpected / shocking* for some people.
- d The ways she *speaks / writes* breaks stereotypes about African American identity.

4

Complete the gaps with the correct word.

deserve willing apply uncomfortable smart carry articulate common

- 1 There's a _____ stereotype that African American people are not as _____. But I do _____ to be here.
- 2 I think it's really important how I _____ myself, how I _____, and how I speak because I think that's breaking the stereotype.
- 3 I feel sometimes yes it may be _____ with people being surprised that I'm smart. I'm _____ to take that. I say oh yes, I am smart because I'm proving to you that it's a generalization. It doesn't _____ to everyone.

carry oneself:

to behave in a particular way, especially with regard to your posture, mannerisms, and overall presence.
How you carry yourself says a lot about how you want to be seen by others.

5

Tick the two sentences which sum up her final message:

- 1 People shouldn't believe what they've been told about African Americans.
- 2 Stereotypes about African American people are among the most harmful.
- 3 All stereotypes must be challenged, but particularly those applying to African Americans.
- 4 The way you act in front of others can help people change their minds about you.
- 5 There is little we can do but how you act in front of others is important.

After you watch

6

Choose ONE of the questions to discuss in pairs or small groups.

- a** We've looked at harmful stereotypes concerning African Americans.
What other stereotypes are you conscious of in your society?
Think of a way to create a counter narrative to one of these stereotypes.

There are a lot of Pakistanis living here, and the negative stereotype about them is that they only work in shops or as taxi drivers. But my best friend is from Pakistan and his older brother works as a vet, I'd invite him to come and speak to the class about his work experience, the rest of the class could prepare questions to ask him.

- b** Look through your materials for studying English. Focus on both images and texts.
Are the representations of the people or cultures stereotypical and / or harmful?
If so, in what way? How do you think they could be improved?
Remember that even seemingly positive representations can be harmful.