Discrimination usually arises from prejudice, which in turn may reflect stereotypes, which include many types of characteristics that can be negative or positive and can be accurate or inaccurate. These stereotypes result from personal interaction with group members in which people notice extremes, people associate rare traits with minority groups, social roles shape behaviors, emotions color interaction, and from the media, social learning, from others, resulting in stereotypes that usually justify social roles and inequalities.
When stereotypes are activated by information about group membership, they influence snap judgments, particularly when capacity is limited or emotions run high;

considered judgments, by shaping the way people seek information, interpret information, or elicit information.

The self-perpetuating nature of stereotypes may be overcome by contact with group members if inconsistent information is too plentiful to explain away, inconsistent information applies to many individuals to block subtyping, inconsistent information applies to typical individuals who cannot be contrasted, or the person chooses not to rely on stereotypes, resulting in changing or ignoring the stereotype.