Building Community: Introduction to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

BUILDING COMMUNITY: INTRODUCTION TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the **Building Community: Introduction to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion** (EDI) eBook! As you embark on your EDI education adventure, this resource will act as a guide to help inform your learning and help you apply EDI principles to your everyday life.

Research suggests establishing an inclusive culture in post-secondary institutions directly correlates to successful learning, living, and working environments. Applying an equity and inclusion lens to decision-making, research, employment practices, and curriculum, builds a stronger and more successful community. Diversity makes us strong. Fostering diversity through equitable and inclusive supports makes us successful.

This short and accessible learning resource will provide you with introductions to key foundational anti-oppression concepts and tools to embed EDI into the fabric of your lives and your individual spaces. You will be provided with the tools necessary to identify and apply a core set of EDI principles, explain key EDI concepts, discuss barriers to full participation for equity-deserving groups, and critically reflect upon the measurable effects of an inclusive climate.

As you make your way through the chapters, be sure to think about how and where you may apply the discussed principles in your own spaces. Perhaps you can apply the concepts discussed in Chapters 3 & 4 about debiasing your thinking to an upcoming hiring committee in your workplace. Or maybe you can use the information in Chapter 7 to become a better ally for equity-deserving groups in your community.

However you choose to continue your anti-oppression and anti-bias education journey, this book provides you with all the tools you need to get started. After all, it takes all of us as individuals and as institutions practicing EDI work to build a flourishing society, in which everyone experiences an authentic sense of belonging.

Happy learning!

Indira Naidoo-Harris

Associate Vice-President, Diversity and Human Rights, University of Guelph

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1. PRIVILEGE

In this chapter, you will explore the concepts of privilege and power.

- What is privilege?

- How should we feel about it?

- Is guilt a productive emotion when we talk about privilege?

This chapter helps you identify the privileges you bring to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) work but also why acknowledging privilege is essential to being an effective social change agent, anti-oppressive thinker, and ally to equity-deserving communities. Privilege – and, on the other hand, the oppressions we face – affect everyone's worldview. But it's how we acknowledge our privilege and what we do with it that matters most.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Define privilege and power;

2. Identify and catalogue one's privileges; and

3. Analyze how those privileges affect and inform one's worldview.

Introduction

Privilege is a system of "automatic advantages and unearned assets available only to dominant groups of people" (McIntosh, 1989, Ferguson, 2014). We haven't done anything to deserve these privileges, nor have we specifically sought them out. They are just engrained advantages that come with certain aspects of our identities, because of the way our society has been historically and contemporarily structured.

Privileges, or a lack of them, are fundamental elements of social and institutional **power**. Privilege often leads to power inequity that determines people's ability (or inability) to affect change, make decisions, and steward resources, even in their own interests.

Because we haven't done anything to earn these privileges, sometimes we feel awkward acknowledging them. It can be awkward or uncomfortable to admit that aspects of our identity have given us power over others. But acknowledging privilege is important because it helps us identify how to act and dismantle systems of oppression.

This chapter will help you answer these questions in more detail:

- Why do people dismiss or feel upset about their privileges?

- What is a privilege check?

- How can we leverage our positions of power to promote equity in post-secondary institutions?

Let's start with an example of an easily recognizable privilege. If you are left-handed, you are part of a community that comprises about 10% of the population (Papadatou-Pastou et al., 2020). As a result, you have likely experienced social norms that are shaped by the dominant right-handed people: the left-sided flap covering the zippers on your pants, the position of the number pad on keyboards, car cup holders, musical instruments, scissors, and small kitchen utensils, such as can openers and vegetable peelers. If you are part of

Privilege n. comes from the Latin *privilegium*, meaning a law for, or

the dominant right-handed population, it is quite possible that you might not have noticed these advantages. In contrast, if you're left-handed, it's possible that you have adapted to use these "normal" tools as a member of the marginalized left-handed group. In this case, people born right-handed have an automatic and unearned privilege, and the **power** to direct and influence the behavior of others. This power might manifest in something as simple as a decision of a company to manufacture a product with the majority in mind, a right-handed product inaccessible to the left-handed population.

against, a private person (Merriam-Webster). In social justice, the term **privilege** described unequal rights, advantages, and protections between dominant and minority groups (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017).

Self-Reflection on Privilege

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/buildingcommunityintrotoedi/?p=5#h5p-1

Video: Sometimes You're a Caterpillar

At this point, you might realize that the term privilege is a relative concept that is experienced by *everyone* to varying degrees. Sometimes you can be an individual with privilege in your social

circles, while at other times you might not be. So, what does it mean when you are interacting with members from another group and your relative privilege changes with the context of your interactions? Please watch Franchesca Ramsey's video Sometimes You're a Caterpillar (3:18 mins), hosted on her YouTube channel.

Privilege Inventory: Wheel of Power

As the video demonstrates, sometimes you're a caterpillar and you may be a straight-A student, but at other times you might be the snail who struggles with their body size or feel like you don't belong in a particular space or group. Having privilege is not a bad thing and should not be the root for guilt because it is a product of complicated cultural, social, political, and historical systems that have been in place long before you were even born. Having privilege doesn't mean you have it easy, or that you didn't work hard. Having privilege simply means that you might not have to overcome the same obstacles that others face. Having privilege means acknowledging how these systems have benefitted you, so you can work to ensure these systems don't present obstacles to others.

What are some other forms of privilege?

Look at this privilege wheel (below). The Wheel of Power and Privilege consists of three rings around "Power and Privilege". The ring closest to the center represents groups who have power and privilege. The middle ring represents obstacles to power and privilege. The outer ring represents equity-deserving groups – those whose access to privilege and power is blocked by the obstacles of the middle ring. In the centre ring, we have identities that are often associated with privilege within our current societal systems and structures. For example, those identifying as male are likely to experience male privilege. This presents a system of advantages and opportunities that aren't available to those who don't identify as male. In addition, those who don't identify as male will experience barriers because of systems of oppression, like misogyny and toxic masculinity. Think about how the slices of this wheel interact. Someone might have privilege as someone who is a citizen and identities as cisgender. But on another part of the wheel, like sexual orientation or race, they might experience oppression. As a result, we might see different experiences of oppression even within each slice of the wheel. For example, a queer white, cisgender, able-bodied, securely housed man may experience oppression related to his queer identity, but other members of the

2SLGBTQIA+ community will also experience additional types of oppression like ableism, racism, or classism. Again, this is not about experiencing guilt about these identities but rather about identifying where you sit in the various pieces of the privilege wheel.
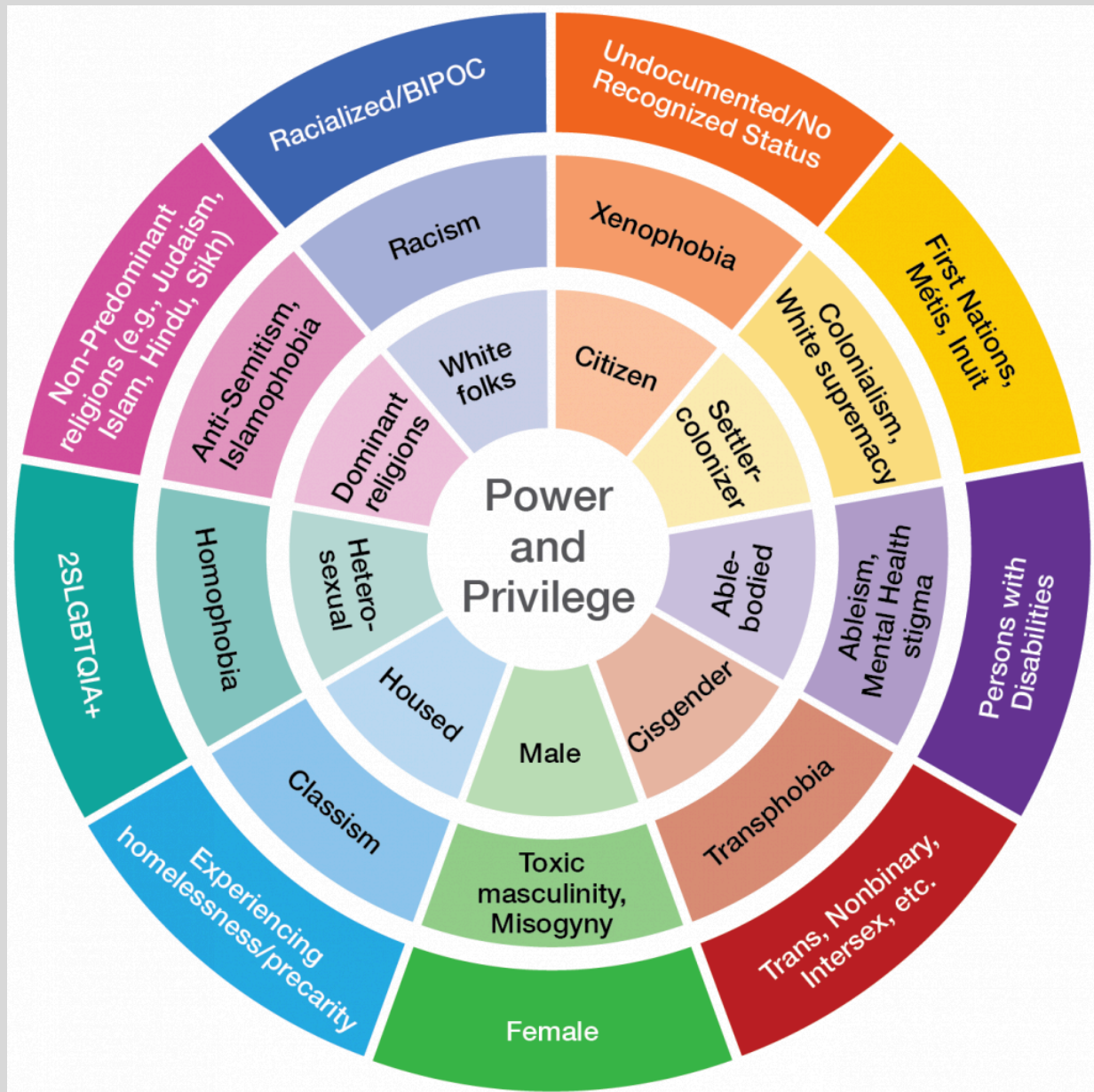

Figure 1.1 The Wheel of Power and Privilege [See image transcript at end of chapter.]

Privilege Check: Never Have I Ever...

Here we adapted the classic "Never Have I Ever" game to provide some scenarios that would allow you to catalogue your own privilege. You will have an opportunity to relate to some oppressions that you may have experienced before, or, recognize your privilege if otherwise. There is no right answer in this exercise, rather a symbolic demonstration of how privilege and oppressions can present in everyday life. Your responses will not be kept or seen by anyone else.

> *An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:*
>
> *https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/buildingcommunityintrotoedi/?p=5#h5p-4*

Did you identify more privilege than your initial self-reflection? Did you recognize any oppressions that you might have overlooked before? It's possible that some of the scenarios seem "normal" because you have experienced them much too frequently or that you have never acknowledged certain privilege in your life because they felt ordinary. However, these ordinary privileges can turn into extraordinary power to fight systemic basis and social oppressions for people who are less fortunate.

Summary

> **Tip #1**
>
> Acknowledge your privilege and how it informs your perspectives as you engage in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) work.

Privilege is a set of unearned advantages granted to people of **certain** dominant groups as a result of complex cultural, social-economic, political and historical structures. Having privilege does *not* mean your life is easy. You may have experienced hardship in one area of your life, while experiencing immense privilege in other areas. Someone who has experienced racial discrimination, for example, may also be able-bodied, and thus, experience privilege related to their physical or mental abilities. Acknowledging our privileges helps us to be aware that others may experience barriers and obstacles that you don't. Similarly, those same folks may not

experience certain barriers and biases that you yourself do. But in order for us to work together to dismantle barriers and biases, we need to acknowledge the privileges, advantages, and systems of power that each of us has. In our society, privileged groups often have more **power** over marginalized groups and are more likely to be in positions of power (Chugh, 2018). In the coming chapters, we'll explore how to use that power to dismantle systems of oppression rather than further entrench advantages.

Acknowledging your privilege is a great start but it won't be enough. As suggested by the ancient adage (popularized by Spider-Man) "With great power comes great responsibility," you can use your power to make a difference:

- to speak out, to challenge social norms and systemic oppressions against equity-deserving groups, or marginalized members of society

- to be an ally and an advocate for social change

- to listen to other people's struggles and act on it

- to make space for others

It takes all of us to transform our society for the better and to challenge inequities.

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Image Credits

Chapter 1 Banner: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

Chapter 1 Divider: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

Figure 1.1 The Wheel of Power and Privilege: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

Image Transcript

Figure 1.1 The Wheel of Power and Privilege

The Wheel of Power and Privilege consists of three rings around "Power and Privilege". The ring closest to the center represents groups who have power and privilege. The middle ring represents obstacles to power and privilege. The outer ring represents equity-deserving groups – those whose access to privilege and power is blocked by the obstacles of the middle ring.

Moving from the central "Power and Privilege" to the "System(s) of Oppression" to "Equity-Deserving Groups" in each of nine sectors beginning at the bottom of the wheel and moving counter-clockwise, the wheel shows us:

- Male – Toxic masculinity, Misogyny – Female
- Cisgender – Transphobia – Trans, Nonbinary, Intersex, etc.

- Able-bodied – Ableism, Mental Health stigma – Persons with Disabilities

- Settler-colonizer – Colonialism, White supremacy – First Nations, Métis, Inuit

- Citizen – Xenophobia – Undocumented/No Recognized Status

- White folks – Racism – Racialized/BIPOC

- Dominant religions – Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia – Non-Predominant religions (e.g., Judaism, Islam, Hindu, Sikh)

- Heterosexual – Homophobia – 2SLGBTQIA+

- Housed – Classism – Experiencing homelessness/precarity

2. RECOGNIZE INTERSECTIONAL OPPRESSION

In this chapter, you will build upon your understanding of privilege to explore how different characteristics of personal and social identity interact to generate unique barriers to full and inclusive participation in society.

- What is oppression? What is prejudice? How does it manifest at the individual and systemic levels?

- What is intersectionality?

- How can an intersectional approach be used to analyze and dismantle systems of oppression?

We will carefully and critically revisit some of the learning activities from Chapter 1, tracing the underlying roots of discrimination and oppression. Then, we will introduce the concept of intersectionality and explore how it can be practiced in EDI work. Additionally, we will, provide some helpful tips for you to reflect on your role to push social change.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Define oppression, prejudice, and intersectionality;

2. Explain how systems of oppression function differently depending upon the intersection of one's identity characteristics; and

3. Compare the effects of systems of oppression when multiple and compounding systems of oppression are involved.

Introduction

In Chapter 1, we asked you to reflect on your own experience and write down five privileges that described some of the automatic advantages you hold. You probably noticed that these five privileges were largely dependent on your identity, and they very likely differed from your roommates', your friends' or even your closest relatives' five privileges. This is because each of us hold distinct individual identity markers, and authentic lived experiences. We all have privileges in certain aspects of our lives, such as right-handedness (as discussed in the previous chapter). However, our various identity markers can also place us at a disadvantage. For instance, a disability can place us at an unearned disadvantage in comparison to able-bodied people. Thus, the extent of our advantages or disadvantages varies depending on our various identity markers such as: gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical ability, size, weight, citizenship, religious affiliation, or educational level.

In contrast, oppression, or unearned disadvantage, disproportionately impacts various social and identity groups, such as equity-deserving groups (i.e., racialized persons, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, women-identified individuals, and 2SLGBTQIA+ members). There are different forms of oppression, such as sexism, racism, ableism, ageism, classism, heterosexism, and other forms of "isms," phobias, and discriminations, which operate at **individual and systemic levels**.

Oppression, n., originates from Latin *oppressiōn*, which defines acts or processes that repeatedly target the same people for harm just because they are members of a particular group (Merriam-Webster). Oppression involves holding someone back or pushing someone down. Its first known use in the English language was in the 14th century and is modernly used to describe "prejudice and discrimination of one social group against another that are backed by legal authority and historical, social, institutional and structural power" (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017).

Prejudice, n., from Latin *praejudicium*, which describes previous judgement and/or damage (Merriam-Webster). The term prejudice can be broadly defined as an unfair feeling of dislike for either someone, something, or a group of people. In the context of EDI, prejudice is projected judgement and assumption rooted in stereotype, which refers to over-generalized pattern to a fixed group of people. Prejudice is often based on limited knowledge or experience, and is about members of social groups to which we do not belong (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017).

Prejudice often presents as disfavor of people outside your social group. When we act on our prejudice, we are demonstrating discrimination.

Privilege & Oppression (Individual and Systemic Levels)

Oppression at the **individual level** occurs when thoughts, attitudes and behaviours affect relationships with other social and identity groups due to existing prejudices or biases. Examples of this include the use of derogatory terms that can equate disability with brokenness, or femininity with weakness or wrongness (i.e., "cries like a girl"). Oppression at the individual level may be more readily apparent to people because we may see it or experience it person-to-person (for example, hearing a racist joke or cultural slur). However, this form of oppression can also occur in more subtle ways, such as microaggressions. Microaggressions are the "brief

everyday slights, insults, indignities, and denigrating messages sent to people of colour [Indigenous peoples, 2SLGBTQIA+ folks, persons with disabilities, immigrants, women], whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their identity group membership" (Wing Sue, et al., 2007). These individual attitudes are based on broader cultural narratives, beliefs, and thoughts, which normalize certain patterns of seeing, thinking, and acting towards others.

Oppression can also operate at a broader, societal level. When oppression exists in laws, policies, common practices, or everyday thinking, then we enter to a systemic level of oppression. Sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism can therefore happen not only between individuals, but also become a part of the way a society operates. The early Women's Movement in Canada illuminated several distinct features of systemic oppression.

The Early Women's Movement in Canada

The example of the early Women's Movement in Canada demonstrates several distinct features of systemic oppression:

First wave of feminism, 1867-1960 (Strong-Boag, 2016)

This period focused on legal and political equality in support of temperance, women's suffrage, pacifism, labour, and health rights. Black abolitionist Mary Ann Shadd was one of the first Black women to receive a law degree, to publish a newspaper, and was one of the first female journalists in Canada that openly championed women's suffrage. Ultimately, the institutional power to grant women suffrage was held in the hands of men because at the time, men controlled all major institutions – government, media, education, police, health care, etc. Women had to organize campaigns and fought for their right to vote and to challenge sexism, a system of oppression that placed women in a disadvantage. The progress was slow but fruitful (Government of Canada, 2021):

- 1916: Women in Manitoba became the first in Canada to win the right to vote.

- 1918: Women aged 21 and over became eligible to vote in federal elections but Indigenous women and men and members of other ethnic groups were still excluded.

- 1927: Alberta's Famous Five advocated for women in Canada to be officially declared as "persons" and took the matter all the way to Canada's highest appeals court at the time – the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

- 1929: Women were declared as "persons".

The second wave of feminism took place from 1960 to 1985, where women advocated for peace and disarmament, equality in education and employment, birth control and ending violence against women. At this time, grassroots groups, such as Voice of Women and Women's Legal Education and Action Fund, started to merge, creating communities and shelters for victims of domestic violence. In 1967, the Royal Commission on the Status of Woman was established, and its first report was tabled in Parliament in 1970. This report outlined 167 recommendations including amendments to the Canadian Labour Code and the Indian Act (Government of Canada, 2021). By the time of the third wave of feminism, activists started to realize that mainstream women (white, middle-class) could not speak for all women, and the concept of "Intersectionality" started to merge (UN Women, 2020).

Intersectionality, n., describes "the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups" (Merriam-Webster).

The theoretical understanding of intersectionality was coined by civil rights advocate, law professor, and leading scholar in critical race theory Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 in her paper "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics". Initially used as a legal term, Crenshaw applied an intersectionality lens to argue that a court's narrative of discrimination was based on a single-issue analysis, which did not consider the double identity markers that marginalized Black women in hiring policies. These women were being discriminated against as being both Black and a woman, and were therefore affected by racism, sexism, and a specific combination of both discriminations that neither Black men nor white women experienced.

Video: #APeoplesJourney: African American Women and the Struggle for Equality

How does intersectionality play out in real life? Check out this 3min video by the National Museum of African American History & Culture (NMAAHC, Aug 29, 2017): *#APeoplesJourney: African American Women and the Struggle for Equality*

Using an intersectional lens means to recognize historical context and systemic oppressions surrounding inequalities, and understand how these inequalities interact with each other, such as classism, racism, homophobia, and ableism. Think about what barriers a first-generation university student would experience during their first year when compared to an Indigenous student with a disability, an international student from a different country, a legacy student whose parents are an employee of the institution, or to a mature student with care-giving responsibilities. An intersectional lens recognizes that each of these students face a set of barriers unique to themselves, regardless of how many overlapping identities they might share.

Summary and How to Practice an Intersectionality Lens

Tip #2

> Recognize how systems of oppression create barriers to full participation.

Currently, the term intersectionality takes on many meanings beyond its initial context. In a 2020 interview with Time Magazine, Crenshaw emphasized that intersectionality is not a mechanism to victimize or to distort, and it does not involve flipping existing power dynamics and cultural structures. Intersectionality is a lens to see how different forms of inequity interact together to shape people's experiences: lived experience is not as simple as the sum of gender, class, sexuality, or immigration status (Hill & Bilge, 2016). For example, post-secondary institutions in Canada were designed for white males as part of our colonial patriarchal history. An intersectional education lens recognizes various identity markers to better understand how to support the wide range of experiences of diverse students and their school outcomes. This can be as simple as gender-neutral and accessible washrooms, wide dietary options, cultural, financial, and accessibility supports in recognition of how individual identities, such as race, gender, orientation, and class-related circumstances, contribute to students' achievement and a sense of belonging.

Even though intersectionality can be practiced at a higher organizational level to examine the cause of overlooked disparities and to dismantle systemic oppression, we can put intersectionality into practice in our everyday life by:

- Acknowledging individual unique lived experiences and multiple struggles.
- Always offering the benefit of the doubt in undesired situations.
- Understanding that an individual could experience different forms of systemic discrimination simultaneously.
- Recognizing your point of view is only based on your lived experience and should not be over-generalized.
- Respecting the voices of those most affected by oppression and following their lead when it comes to advocacy issues.
- Being open-minded and inclusive about different perspectives on social justice issues.
- Broadening your network circle to welcome true diversity.

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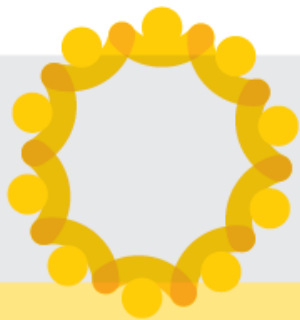
3. ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR BIASES

In previous chapters, we discussed the ways privilege and oppression work, and the importance of using an intersectional lens to challenge inequity and oppression in our society. In this chapter, we will reflect on the ways our individual and interpersonal attitudes and behaviours towards others are largely influenced by our context, lived experiences and cultural/social norms. For instance, sometimes the language we use or the jokes we make could be perceived as stereotypical or inappropriate by others. These behaviours can often be unintentional or derived from our unconscious mind. These demonstrations of unconscious bias, also known as implicit bias, are complicated psychological and physiological products derived from our culture, narratives, ideas, development, beliefs, education, and/or social interactions. In the following two-part chapters, we will identify different forms of biases that manifest in our society and how to address them. In the first part, we will introduce some current work by social scientists to explore the story behind our consciousness. How do we develop biases? What are the different forms of biases and how can we measure them?

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Explain the development of biases;

2. Define conscious and unconscious biases; and

3. Measure your own unconscious bias using an Implicit Association Test (IAT).

Introduction

We all develop and demonstrate biases in any moment of our daily life interactions. As young as 3 months old, we can recognize and show preference to specific racial groups, and respond more positively towards those 'who look like us' (Bar-Haim et al., 2006). As our cognition develops, we start to associate traits and status markers with racially and culturally diverse groups, even before starting elementary school (Newheiser et al., 2014; Olson et al., 2012), at which time some of us first come to experience negative consequences of not sharing certain familiar facial features (Marcelo & Yates, 2019). This cognitive capability is rooted in our central nervous system that is responsible for stress response, which evolved as a survival mechanism to either fight a dangerous situation or flee to safety. In modern society, this same "Fight or Flight" instinct can lead us to elevate our heart rate, blood pressure, as well as having sweaty palms, and rapid breathing when we are involved in an unfamiliar and stressful situation, such as talking to strangers or responding to something or someone outside the normal stereotypes. Consequently, our behaviour under these circumstances is more likely to be driven by intuitive habits and gut feelings, rather than a deliberated thought process (Yu, 2016).

Why is this important?

Embedding equity, diversity, and inclusion in our daily practices challenges us to confront social stereotypes by educating ourselves and reflecting on how we perceive our relationships with others. This means that we need to become aware of our instincts and our unconsciousness, and act deliberatively to make meaningful

contributions towards building equitable and inclusive communities for everyone. In the following sections, we will introduce different types of biases and how to recognize them in our daily life.

Bias and Stereotypes

Bias: n, from French *biais*, describes "a tendency, inclination, or prejudice toward or against something or someone" (Merriam-Webster). Biases are often based on stereotypes, rather than actual knowledge of an individual or circumstance. That can result in prejudgments that lead to discriminatory practices or treating some people unfairly" ([Psychology Today](#)). Bias can be held by an individual, a group, or an institution based on any aspect of individual identities, including but not limited to gender, sexual orientation, age, race, education, religion, disability status, and cultural background. For instance, "Trans people and other gender non-conforming individuals are often judged by their physical appearance for not fitting and conforming to stereotypical norms about what it means to be a "man" or "woman." They experience stigmatization, prejudice, bias, and fear on a daily basis. While some may see trans people as inferior, others may lack awareness and understanding about what it means to be trans." The term "bias" can refer to both the unfair act and the prejudiced inclination or preference one might display.

It is important to note that it is natural to engage in biases and no one is immune to having them. This is how our brain operates – it recognizes patterns and associations in the world. Social scientists have defined distinct types of [cognitive biases](#), such as [confirmation bias](#), attribution bias, availability bias, and affinity bias (Nalty, 2016), as well as various contextual biases that commonly occur in academia, the education system, media, and law enforcement. Bias can manifest as both negative and positive attitudes towards a person or a member of a particular group leading to differential treatment and unfair outcomes.

Bias is largely influenced by our environment and is rooted in the perception of ***stereotypes***.

Stereotype: n, refers to over-generalized beliefs of something, a situation, or any individual member of a particular social group (Merriam-Webster). Stereotypes are often influenced by societal expectations and individual lived experiences. Stereotyping can shape our behaviours and can often lead to negative or normative perceptions and biases.

One of the most expressed stereotypes is centered around individual gender identity, known as gender stereotypes. Gender stereotypes, or gender schema, are cognitive cultural and social beliefs about personal traits, attitudes, behaviour, preference, and/or physical appearance of men and women (Eckes & Trautner, 2000). These gender stereotypes are rooted in the traditional gendered division of labour where men are stereotypically viewed as confident, self-reliant, and dominant, while women are stereotyped as caregivers (Biernat & Malin, 2008).

Stereotypes can be explicit, meaning conscious or self-aware. For example, you could actively look to your friends of Asian descent for math support because you perceive Asians as being good at math. Stereotypes can also be implicit and operate on an unconscious level, leading to implicit or unconscious biases. For example, you could be unconsciously prioritizing medical support from a male medical professional because you have a gender stereotype towards doctors.

Conscious (Explicit) Bias vs. Unconscious (Implicit) Bias

The concepts of conscious and unconscious biases are very intuitive:

Conscious bias: n, or explicit biases, are self-aware attitudes or assumptions we hold against other people, for example, conscious biases can be self-aware intentions and predeterminations

of people based on explicit prejudice or stereotypes of that group (Ruhl, 2020). Conscious bias is always overtly expressed and occurs as discriminatory behavior towards certain groups.

Unconscious bias: n, or implicit bias, describes unconscious attitudes or beliefs we hold about diverse groups of people (Catalyst, 2014). Unconscious biases operate on the subconscious level and are difficult to detect without a proper toolkit. **Everyone** holds unconscious and implicit associations with different groups of people through our interactions with the world via social media, our friends and family, education, cultural and social context, religion, news, and television.

Project Implicit – The Implicit Association Test (IAT)

Video: Implicit Bias Defined

This short video (2:44) from the National Education Association explains unconscious bias: what is the underlying neurological pathway and how to address it? Implicit Bias Defined

As Robbie discussed in the video, the first step we can take to reduce our unconscious biases is to **recognize** them. In this following exercise, you will be directed to an external website called **Project Implicit – The Implicit Association Test (IAT)**, which measures the implicit attitudes and beliefs that you might hold against different groups of people, by scoring the strength of association between different identity markers (e.g., age, sexuality, skin tone) and evaluation (e.g., good, bad) (Greenwald et al., 1998). There are five parts to the test, in which you will be asked to quickly sort concepts and evaluation into categories by pressing

different "e" and "I" keys on your keyboards. You will repeat this test when the concept gets combined with the evaluation to test how long it takes you to click whenever the concept and evaluation are placed differently, such as Fat People/Good vs. Fat People/Bad. You will also have a chance to choose your individual demographic data. Just keep in mind that you always have the option to "Decline to Answer" on the lower bottom corner in the initial questionnaire. Once you entered the IAT test, you will need to complete all five parts to receive a final score. Click Take a Test to access the test.

Summary and Self-Reflection

Tip #3

Identify how unconscious bias contributes to systems of oppression.

In this chapter, Acknowledge Your Biases, we discussed different forms of biases and how it develops and manifests in our society. Conscious bias and unconscious bias can be thought as a free-floating iceberg where conscious bias occupies the 10% above surface and unconscious bias operates the majority underneath waters of our consciousness.

Conscious Bias

Self-aware intentions and predeterminations of people based on explicit prejudice or stereotypes

LINE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Unconscious Bias

Unconscious attitudes or beliefs we hold about different groups of people, as a response of our neurological shortcuts
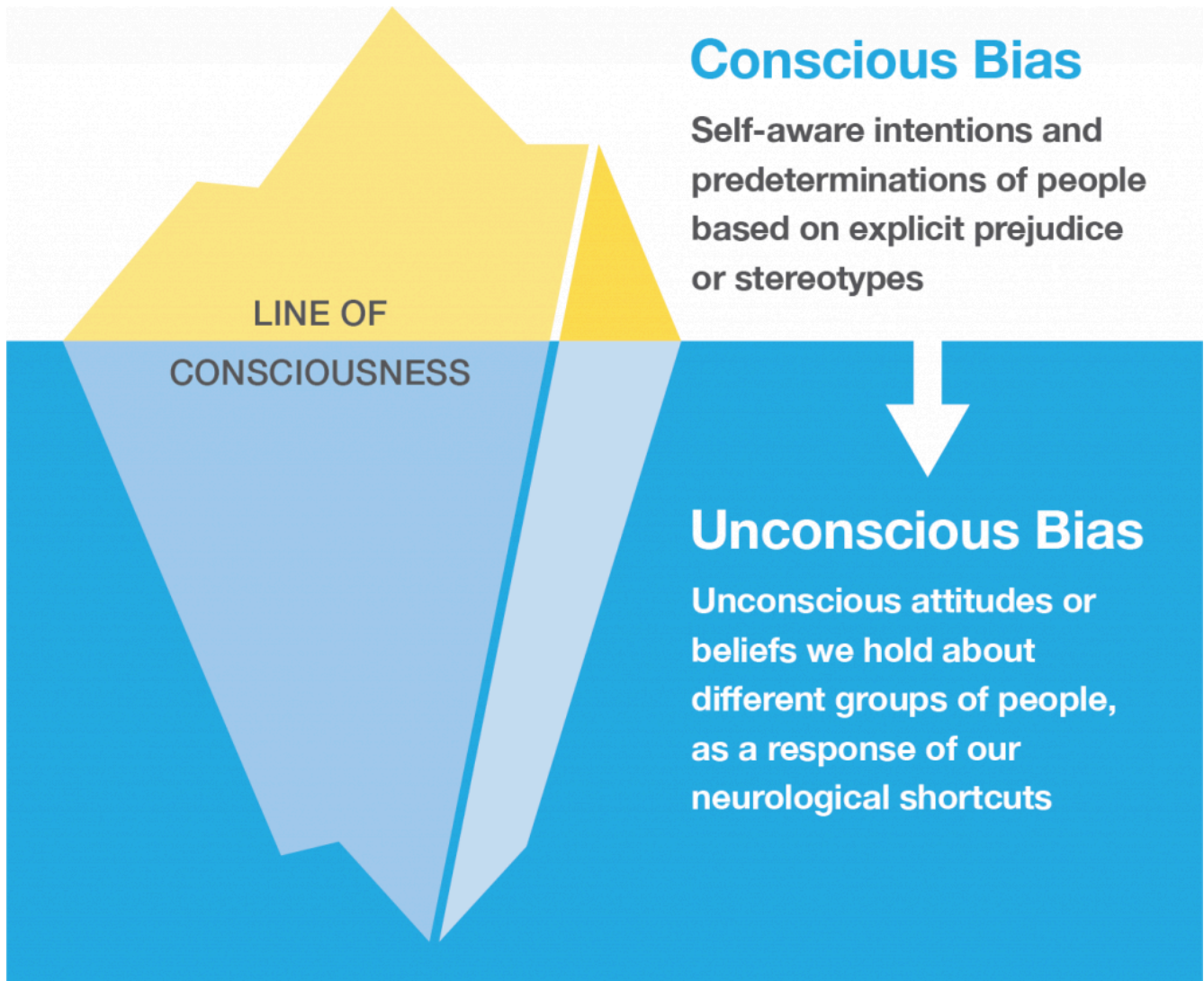
Figure 3.1 The Bias Iceberg [See image transcript at end of chapter.]

Regardless of our identities and lived experiences, we all have our own icebergs of biases because of our early childhood development and our interactions with the world but we can work to address it. Find out how you can outsmart your own consciousness in the next chapter, Address Your Biases.

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Image Credits

Chapter 3 Banner: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

Chapter 3 Divider: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

Figure 3.1 The Bias Iceberg: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

Image Transcript

Figure 3.1 The Bias Iceberg

An image of an iceberg floating in water. The waterline represents the Line of Consciousness.

The portion of the iceberg above the waterline represents Conscious Bias: Self-aware intentions and predeterminations of people based on explicit prejudice or stereotypes.

The portion of the iceberg below the waterline represents Unconscious Bias: Unconscious attitudes or beliefs we hold about different groups of people, as a response of our neurological shortcuts.

4. ADDRESS YOUR BIASES

As we discussed in Chapter 3, biases are complicated psychological products derived from our development and experiences, education, culture, beliefs, and/or social interactions. However, biases can drive disrespectful behaviours that harm different groups of people and can result in situations like toxic work-place cultures, low sense of belonging, diminished employee satisfaction levels and reduced productivity and innovation. In this chapter, we will showcase some examples of microaggressions and instances of biases that commonly occur in post-secondary institutions and encourage you to explore and brainstorm ways to be an effective upstander. How can you raise awareness of unconscious biases for yourself and for others? What are some of the steps for intervention?

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Address your own biases;

2. Define different forms of microaggressions; and

3. Practice how to work with your peers to gain self-awareness.

Introduction

Although you consider yourself to be a fair and just person, you may have been surprised by your scores after having completed the Implicit Association Test in the last chapter. Don't worry, you have already taken an important first step in recognizing your own unconscious biases. Sometimes people think unconscious biases only apply to those with power and privilege, but that is not true at all. Our own little iceberg of biases might differ in size and shape, but each one of us have and demonstrate unconscious biases in our everyday life.

Even though we all have our own biases, we must work hard to dismantle them. Unconscious biases lead to unfair outcomes in our society. For example, there is overwhelming evidence suggesting that implicit bias could skew school teachers' expectations for students' academic achievements, and that Black students are more likely to be suspended, expelled, or punished harshly (Okonofua & Eberhardt, 2015; van den Bergh et al., 2010; Wright, 2016). Unconscious racial biases have also been found to result in differential pain medication prescription (Hoffman et al., 2016) and patient care (Cooper et al., 2012; Hagiwara et al., 2014). Evidence showing the impact of unconscious biases can also be found in academic, business, criminal justice, film industry, politics, leadership, and education system practices (Moss-Racusin et al., 2012, Staats et al., 2017).

Act on Unconscious Biases

Video: How to Deal with Unconscious Bias?

How can we act to address these unconscious biases?
How do we mitigate some of the negative impacts that we or others might exert?
Check out this short video (2:54) by Simon Fraser University's Co-operative Education: How to Deal with Unconscious Bias?

Let us take a minute to reflect on the steps proposed in this video.

1. Recognize that unconscious biases exist, slow down your thought process and take some deep breaths. Examine your behaviour: ask if you interact with your peers and colleagues differently based on their specific identity markers? (Race, gender, social class, age, sexual orientation, religion affiliation, place of origin or education level). You can also try a little mental exercise where you change certain aspects of your peers' identities in your head, and reflect on whether you would have behaved the same way or differently? Try out different possibilities. Perhaps you could revisit the same IAT or try out a couple of different topics to get a better understanding of your own unconscious mind.

2. When confronting unexpected situations, take a moment to examine your own behaviour. Ask yourself some questions: how would you have handled an interaction if, for instance, your classmate or colleague looked like you? Or if your classmate/colleague did not look like you? Ask yourself whether you have made assumptions or judgments in the ways in which you interact with others. Have you considered other points of view? Have you had an open and honest conversation with your peers? Listen to what they have to say and challenge yourself to unlearn cultural narratives that have harmed your perception about individuals or social groups that are not like you.

If you still have that screenshot of your last IAT score, please open it up and take a few minutes to reflect. Can you recognize some biased attitude or behaviour towards different groups of people without meaning to?

Think of your recent social interactions. Do you wish you could have done or said something differently or not at all?

Maybe you realized that during your interaction with your peers, you had some subtle but inappropriate behaviours, such as asking them "where are they *really* from?" or acting surprised when their true-self conflicts with your perceived stereotypes. These subtle, unintentionally harmful behaviours are examples of microaggressions.

Microaggression

Microaggression, n, is defined as "a comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expressed a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group (such as racial minority) (Merriam-Webster). This term was first coined by Harvard professor Chester Pierce in 1970. In recent years, the term microaggression has been extended from the original racial macroaggression to describe insults, indignities and derogatory messages that occur on a daily basis to members of equity-deserving groups, and are often unconsciously enacted by privileged group members. (Sue, 2010).

Video: How Microaggressions are Like Mosquito Bites. Same Difference.

You might have heard that sometimes people refer to microaggressions as mosquito bites. In this short video (2:46), "How microaggressions are like mosquito bites. Same Difference" by Fusion Comedy, you will find out why mosquito bites are a very fitting metaphor to describe microaggressions, as well as learn some examples of microaggressions, which are experienced by different groups of people every day: [How microaggressions are like mosquito bites. Same difference](#)

There are three different types of microaggressions (Sue et al., 2007):

1. **Microassault** is a deliberate and conscious derogative comment sent by a verbal or nonverbal message that is meant to hurt people's feeling through name-calling and discriminatory actions. An example of a microassault could be calling someone racial slurs or prioritizing white supremacy.

2. **Microinsult** is subtle snubs and insensitive comments that convey rudeness and demeans a person's contributions, such as talking over a member of an equity-deserving group or "helping" a person with a disability without asking.

3. **Microinvalidation** is subtle exclusion or negation of one's thoughts, feelings or experiential reality, such as complimenting someone's English even though English was their first language or asking a racial minority where they are *really* from.

Like acting on our unconscious biases, we can recognize and address microaggressions using the following self-awareness exercise:

1. **Intention**: what was the intent of my behaviour?

2. **Assumption**: what assumptions did I make?

3. **Impact**: what was the impact? Keep in mind that intent does not supersede impact.

It is important to note that it is an ongoing continuous process to combat our own biases and microaggressions. It is not about making an occasional big step forward; it is about having consistent progress. Practising these self-reflection and self-awareness exercises in a group setting would help. Here, we adapted a classic Johari Window Model to help you through different discovery processes to uncover the unconscious biases within your EDI learning.

Self-Awareness (Johari Window Model)

The Johari Window model was developed by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham in 1955 to understand self-awareness within a team through an exploratory activity that aims to increase the 'open self' area.

Known to Self | Unknown to Self

Known to Others

Open Self

Information about you that both you & others know

Blind Self

Information about you that you don't know but others do know

Unknown to Others

Hidden Self

Information about you that you know but others don't know

Unknown Self

Information about you that neither you nor others know

Figure 4.1 Johari Window Model [See image transcript at end of chapter.]

Summary and Self-Reflection

> **Tip #4**
>
> Challenge unconscious biases to dismantle systems of oppression.

Biases, conscious or unconscious, can have a pervasive impact on others. Biases are inevitable – they are a psychological product cultivated from our development and our lived experiences as our brain seeks patterns and to take shortcuts. But biases can be addressed and unlearned. It takes time, effort, constant learning, self-criticizing, and reflection to keep track of our motives and progress. Get out of your comfort zone to broaden your experiences. Be accountable for your actions and the actions of others.

The next time you talk to someone, whether it's a family member or a colleague, keep an inventory of your language and your actions, and ask yourself:

- What were my assumptions?
- Would I respond differently if this was someone with a different identity profile?
- How would I make my language more neutral and inclusive?
- Did I give them the benefit of the doubt?
- How can I be a better listener?
- Is there something else I could've done different?

A small step forward can be big progress with long-lasting impacts. It takes all of us to work collaboratively to combat toxic schemas.

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Image Credits

Chapter 4 Banner: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

Chapter 4 Divider: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

Figure 4.1 Johari Window Model: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

Image Transcript

Figure 4.1 Johari Window Model

Johari Window Model

OPEN SELF (Known to Self and Others)

- Information about you that both you & others know.

BLIND SELF (Unknown to Self, Known to Others)

- Information about you that you don't know but others do know.

HIDDEN SELF (Known to Self, Unknown to Others)

- Information about you that you know but others don't know.

UNKNOWN SELF (Unknown to Self or Others)

- Information about you that neither you nor others know.

5. CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

In this chapter, we will examine important concepts such as tokenism, cultural appropriation, and cultural appreciation. Understanding these concepts and how to identify and address them, benefits our approaches to equity, diversity, and inclusion work.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Define tokenism;

2. Explain why tokenism and cultural appropriation hinder the development of inclusive communities; and

3. Identify ways to build collaborative and cooperative communities that celebrate diversity without involving tokenism or cultural appropriation.

Introduction

As we've seen in previous chapters, building equitable and inclusive communities begins with recognizing how our unique individual and social identities inform our worldviews. We see the world as we've experienced it. But there are many diverse and intersecting identities within our communities that have different perspectives, ideas, and backgrounds. Ensuring everyone feels safe and welcome to participate can lead to a stronger and thriving society.

In fact, fostering diversity within our workplaces, classrooms, and neighbourhoods, brings a broad range of perspectives and complimentary skillsets that often lead to better performance and collaboration, increased innovation and productivity, higher profits, and a more inclusive workplace culture (AlShebil et al., 2018; Freeman & Huang, 2014; Roberge & van Dick, 2010; Swartz et al., 2019). However, it's important to note that it isn't enough to simply ensure diversity exists within an organization. Fostering diversity means making sure those with diverse identities feel valued, included, and supported. Diversity without inclusion can lead to equity-deserving folks experiencing social isolation, decreased visibility, constrained expectations consistent with their gender and racial stereotypes. These negative experiences were formally studied by Harvard Professor Rosabeth Moss Kanter, where the theory of tokenism emerged (Kanter, 1977; King et al., 2010).

Tokenism

Tokenism, n, "the policy or practice of making only a symbolic effort (as to desegregate)" (Merriam-Webster). In contemporary society, tokenism can be broadly interpreted as false advertisement of diversity (without inclusion) – the practice of adding or including someone to prevent criticism and to appear diverse.

Tokenism can be a patronizing impediment towards true equity. You might have heard of or have witnessed "the Smurfette Principle" in children's books and television programs, where the main cast is made up primarily of brave and adventurous male characters, plus *exactly* one female character who is portrayed as lacking individual charisma and relevant storylines, and a "Black Best Friend", who served a white lead character (Giang, 2016). However, being the only leading female in a movie or being cast as a Black character doesn't automatically imply tokenism as long as they are relevant to the storyline and have the same potential to evolve and to undergo personal growth.

The Theory of Tokenism

In the study of social sciences, the theory of tokenism was first published in 1977 (Kanter, 1977). Professor Kanter defined a "token" group as a distinct subgroup with less than 15% of the overall work group, and the "dominants" as the other subgroup that consisted of over 85% work group. Kanter argued that people, who worked in this skewed structure, were susceptible to differential experiences where individuals from a token group tended to endure heightened visibility, increased isolation from the dominant members, and distorted assimilation to fit a stereotypical role deemed appropriate by the dominants. Since then, this theory has been tested in various occupational groups, including health care professionals, scientists, law enforcement officers, school teachers, wall street employees and more (Stichman et al., 2010), and social scientists started to recognize the complexity of tokenism that's beyond numerical representations. For example, men and women could experience the workplace differently, where women tend to experience more barriers in male-dominated professions, such as the glass ceiling, sticky floor, and concrete floor phenomena, and men are more likely to experience the glass escalator effect which advances their careers in female-dominated professions (Williams, 1992).

Tokenism vs. Representation vs. Diversity

Sometimes, the difference between tokenism, representation and diversity can be blurry. On the surface, tokenism and representation may look similar, and can both be considered as a quantitative demonstration of diversity. However, the real difference resides in the intent and execution. For example, are people included only because of their distinct identities, or because of their work performance? Do under-represented members have the same power in similar positions? Are their voices being heard? Are they provided with the same level of support, mentorship, and advancement opportunities? Remember that diversity without equity is dangerous, and inclusion without deep consideration of the systemic barriers affecting equity-deserving groups impedes a true sense of belonging and full participation of all members.

Tokenism also contributes to another dichotomy where diversity is perceived as a compromise for excellence by some people. We need to recognize first, that excellence only exists when the whole population is considered, and second, some of the traditional assessment markers can be biased against certain groups of people (see Chapter 3. Acknowledge your Biases and Chapter 4. Address your Biases, for more details). We need to keep in mind the value of diversity particularly in post-secondary institutions to incorporate diverse perspectives, to teach students a broad spectrum of ideas and talents, to better mentor and be role models for students of all backgrounds, and to build international collaboration. We can all make an active effort to include, respect, and support under-represented members in our classroom, our community, and our workplace.

Table 5.1 Sample Actions to Create Inclusive Workplace Culture (in no particular order, adapted from CCDI 2014, Ceridian 2021, and Gagliardi 2021)

Individual-Level	Team-Level	Organization-Level
Be humble, kind, openminded and respectful about unique individual identities and experience	EDI training	Setup EDI mandates
Make space for others to speak	Value diverse perspectives	Clear and achievable EDI Goals
Recognize your privilege	Talent leadership that confronts gender stereotypes	Zero-tolerance policy against discriminatory behaviour and assaults
Speak up	Listen to the needs of others and do check ins	Institutional audit with EDI specialist
Effective allyship	Inclusive hiring practices	Promote under-represented members to the decision-making tables
Pay attention	Forming a local EDI committee	Be proactive, accountable, and responsive
Confront your own biases and reflect	Flexible work arrangement and accommodations	Avoid over-feature minority group in promotional materials
Check your intentions	Ensure sufficient educational supports are in place	Promote pay equity
Educate yourself	Celebrate "Appreciate Diversity Month" in April	Measure impact and progress
Use pronouns	Acknowledge cultural holidays and create diversity reading list	Cultural celebration calendar
Reflect on your behaviour		Formal mentorship and sponsorship programs

Cultural Appropriation vs. Cultural Appreciation

While tokenism focuses on the intent of including people for symbolic appearance, another common practice

that could squander our efforts towards true equity, diversity and inclusion is cultural appropriation, or cultural misappropriation.

The term "**cultural appropriation**" originated in the 1980s as part of the post-colonial vocabulary that describes the adoption of the artistic designs, fashion, themes, or styles from one cultural group that is not their own (Drabble & Stringer, 2007). This includes unauthorized "borrowing" of another culture's intellectual property, cultural expressions and artifacts, and is most harmful when the target cultural appropriation belongs to minority groups that have been historically oppressed or exploited (Scafidi, 2005).

Cultural appropriation is a problematic topic because it often takes away the credit and capital owned by the original culture. While one person might perceive it as a tribute, others may see it as disrespectful and harmful. Context is crucial. If you have any hesitation and doubt about certain cultural creations, it is always a good practice to learn about their history and tradition to expand your cultural awareness. Additionally, we all should make a conscious effort to consult recognized experts/leaders from the culture being drawn from, to make sure depictions, descriptions and representations of that culture are appropriate. We are so fortunate to live in a world that fostered so many different cultural beliefs, traditions, languages, customs, and knowledge. Respectful cultural appreciation and exchange can diversify our perspectives and our world view.

Appropriation or Appreciation?

Reflecting on what you have learned in this chapter, review the following actions and select the one(s) that could evidence tokenism or cultural appropriation.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/buildingcommunityintrotoedi/?p=81#h5p-5

Summary and Self-Reflection

Tip #5

Celebrate equity-deserving folks without tokenizing or appropriating culture.

Contemporary human rights movements and civil rights campaigns have pushed for profound social changes, but there is much to do in terms of equity and anti-oppression. While there has been increased attention paid to these areas in recent years, equity-deserving groups have advocated for structural and systemic changes for decades. Oppression is an engrained reality of our historical and contemporary circumstances. Thus, we must refocus our attention on equity-deserving communities who have led this work, by learning from them, and acknowledging that our work must be built on the priorities of the lived experiences identified from equity-deserving folks. As part of our learning process, we need to constantly self-reflect on our actions.

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Chapter 5 Divider: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

6. INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

In this chapter, we will explore ways to use inclusive language when exchanging ideas and communicating with other people. How does EDI language evolve overtime? How can we use inclusive terminology when addressing LGBTQ2SIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Two-Spirit, Intersex, and Asexual) individuals? What are some of the guiding principles?

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate how to use inclusive language;

2. Use appropriate LGBTQ2SIA+ terminology and pronouns; and

3. Explain how to follow the lead of equity-deserving groups in defining their own preferred use of language.

Introduction

Language is a communication system that is based on words, gestures, music, and artistic creations to connect with other people. It dates back thousands of years, long before the emergence of the first civilization, and has a remarkable amount of variety in terms of distinguished alphabet, vocabularies, and dialects. Language is vital for human connection as it allows us to express our feelings, thoughts, build relationships, and is part of each unique culture. The language we use today is an evolved product that reflects historical, social, economic, and cultural processes, and therefore, is vulnerable to biases and social stereotypes. For example, historically, all positions of power were occupied by men, such as congressman, policeman, fireman. However, these days, we use gender-neutral language as a standard practice to refer to a member of congress, police officers and firefighters. This movement towards inclusive language aims to ensure that all members of society are respected and valued. Inclusive communication is a powerful anti-oppression tool to build a sense of belonging that is free from patronizing stereotypes and discriminatory descriptors.

General Principles

The following principles are adapted from inclusive language style guides produced by Queen's University and the University of Victoria.

- **Person-centered language**. We need to avoid descriptors and focus on mentioning individual identity and characteristics that are relevant to a story. For example, avoid saying "the Jewish students", and instead use a person-centered language such as "the exchange students from Israel". Similarly, instead of saying "a disabled person" say "a person with a disability". When referring to abilities/disabilities, we need to put emphasis on the person (e.g., student/staff/faculty member with a disability, a person who has epilepsy, person living with schizophrenia), and use language that conveys a positive capability rather than focusing on their limitations and disabilities. Be sensitive that chronic conditions and disability can be both visible and non-visible.

- **Gender-Neutral language**. Use words such as "partner", "parent", "care-giver", "employee", "first-year students", and avoid terms with "man", such as "chairman", "mankind", "ombudsman", "sportsman", "guys", etc. A classic example is the evolution of popular Star Trek phrase from the "Where No Man Has Gone Before" in the original Star Trek television to "Where No One Has Gone Before" in the Star Trek: The Next Generation.

- **Remember the difference between in-group and out-group naming**, and that certain reclaimed, once-derogatory terms, may only be appropriate to be used for those belonging to the same group. For example, the word "queer" historically meant strange or peculiar. As a reclaimed umbrella term, the term queer is now proudly used by individuals within the LGBTQ2SIA+ community.

- **Avoid using stereotypic descriptors** that relates to people's identity, such as "bossy", "lady Doctor", "male nurse'" and do not make assumptions based on individual's physical characteristics.

- **Be respectful of diverse backgrounds and perspectives** and make conscious effects to guide your language by the preference of those concerned.

We need to keep in mind that language can evolve quickly so it is important to keep your vocabulary up to date. We also need to be mindful that not everybody shares the same principles. You should make an active effort to ensure your language follows the preference of your audience groups.

Inclusive Language for the LGBTQ2SIA+ Community

Before we introduce you to the proper way to address members from the LGBTQ2SIA+ Community, let us first take a minute to review all the important terminologies. The acronym **LGBTQ2SIA+** is based in White, Western gay culture and has evolved to celebrate the diversity of its community. The full acronym is **L**esbian, **G**ay, **B**isexual, **T**ransgender, **Q**ueer/**Q**uestioning, **2S**pirit, **I**ntersex, **A**sexual/**A**romantic, + many other gender identities and sexual orientations (the 519, 2020). The word cloud that follows includes many terminologies used by the LGBTQ2SIA+ community. See the Transcript and Definitions for more details.

Transcript and Definitions: LGBTQ2SIA+ Word Cloud

The following definitions have been adapted from the University of Guelph's *Positive Space Training – Part 1* online module (the 519, 2016, 2020).

- **Sex Assigned at Birth** is what someone – usually a doctor or midwife, but occasionally in consultation with whoever birthed you – assigned you as when you were born. This is usually exclusively male or female and is based on your sex attributes (i.e., your genitals). Sometimes, a baby might be assigned intersex if the doctor was unable to determine the baby's sex. When this happens, doctors would likely follow up with further testing to determine the sex of the baby.

- **Sex** is determined by individual biological makeup that include internal and external genitalia, chromosomes, hormones, and secondary sex characteristics (for example breasts, body hair, hip width). Many of these characteristics are not visibly apparent on some people, and a few of them are not apparent until after people are much older (i.e., during or after puberty). The different sex categories (male, female, and intersex) are on spectrums, as some people have a combination of different characteristics.

- **Gender identity** is someone's internal sense of themselves or whom they know themselves to be. People might also identify with just one gender, or parts of many different genders (e.g., Man/Boy, Woman/Girl, and Other Gender such as agender or non-binary). Sometimes, people's gender identity aligns with their assigned sex, but this is not always the case. When people's gender identity and expression correspond with their sex, they are **cisgender**. When people's gender identity and expression are different than their sex, they are **transgender**.

- **Gender expression** is how someone expresses their gender to the world through their choice of clothing, hairstyle, makeup preference, the way the talk, or their interests. Gender expression (Masculine, Feminine, and Androgynous/Other) does not necessarily align with gender identity for reasons such as access, comfort, or safety. For example, a man might have long hair and wear makeup, but still self-identifies as a man. Therefore, we cannot tell someone's gender identity just by looking at them.

- **Sexual orientation** is to whom someone is attracted sexually. Identities commonly associated with sexual orientation include straight, gay, lesbian, and/or bisexual. **Romantic orientation** is to whom someone is attracted romantically. This is a less common term that describes who you want to engage with in romantic activities, such as cuddling, dating, or holding hands. Some people are sexually and/or romantically attracted

to one gender identity, others are attracted to multiple genders. Romantic and sexual orientation do not necessarily align either. For example, someone might be romantically attracted to people of all genders, but only sexually attracted to men.

It is important to remember that sex assigned at birth, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, and romantic orientation are five distinct aspects of people. They all exist on spectrums and are not always consistent. These spectrums are complex, diverse, and very personal.

LGBTQ2SIA+ Vocabulary

The vocabulary used in LGBTQ2SIA+ Community is an exemplary demonstration of how quickly our language changes. As our society starts to respect and appreciate the diverse genders and orientations, our language evolves to be more inclusive and respectful. For example, inclusive terminology "Gay" or "Lesbian" is now used instead of "homosexual" that stigmatized individuals in the LGBTQ2SIA+ community. Language around a trans person has also evolved rapidly in the past few decades, and stigmatized words, such as transsexual, transgenderism, tranny, Male-to-Female (MTF) or Female-to-Male (FTM), sex reassignment surgery/treatment should all be avoided. Instead, trans is the current umbrella term, and the procedures that help people transition to their self-identified gender is called gender affirmation treatment or gender affirmation surgery. Keep in mind that all individuals are their unique and authentic self and should always be addressed by their preference.

Pronouns

An effective way to acknowledge people's gender identities is through the use of pronouns. A pronoun is a part of speech that replaces a place, idea, object, and emotion, such as "it", "this", "those" (i.e., instead of "this apple is very sweet", we would say "it is very sweet"). Pronouns can also be used to reflect people's gender identity. Most common forms of pronouns include He/Him/His/Himself, She/Her/Hers(s)/Herself, and gender-neutral pronoun They/Them/Theirs/Themself/Themselves. Although there are forms of pronouns such as Ze, Ve, Xe, Ey, Fae, the key is not to remember every single gender pronoun, but to **respect how people self-identity**.

Video: Pronouns like she/her, he/him and they/them explained

Watch this short video (1:35) CBC Kids News to explore what pronouns are and how to use them in our everyday life: [Pronouns like she/her, he/him and they/them explained](#)

Practicing Pronouns

> *An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:*
> *https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/buildingcommunityintrotoedi/?p=87#h5p-6*

Summary and Self-Reflection

Tip #6

Use inclusive language and monitor changing EDI language.

Language is powerful. It can make or break a person. In our everyday life, what we say or do, and how we say or do, makes a big difference for people around us. Inclusive language can make people feel welcome, encouraged, respected, and supported. On the contrary, when we do not make an active effort to ensure all members are included, we are missing out on diverse perspectives and unique talents. As you continue your learning, it is important to reflect and ask yourself:

- Did you talk to people the way you want to be talked to?

- Were you using positive and neutral language regardless of people's identity and characteristics?

- Did you address people the way they preferred?

- Did you use plain and accessible language rather than complicated acronyms or jargon?

- Did you acknowledge the diversity of your audience and use appropriate pronouns?

Additional Resources

- The Safe Zone Project – Resources

- GLAAD Media Reference Guide – 10th Edition

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Chapter 6 Divider: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

Figure 6.1 LGBTQ2SIA+ Word-cloud: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

7. ALLYSHIP

The term ally or allyship is quickly becoming one of the most popular EDI terms. But what does it really mean to be an ally? In this chapter, we will discuss what allyship is, and explore the role allyship plays in pushing social and systematic changes. What are different forms of allyship and why is it important for equity-deserving groups? What are some of the principles and strategies to practice effective allyship in your everyday life?

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Explain what allyship is;

2. Differentiate between performative allyship and effective allyship;

3. Identify ways to improve your allyship skills; and

4. Through self-reflection, ensure you are applying an anti-oppression lens to every decision and interaction.

Introduction

One of the most effective ways to initiate changes towards personal, institutional, and social justice is to get involved, to champion, to promote, to bring awareness and/or to actively work in solidarity with members of equity-deserving groups. When you walk the walk as someone who does not necessarily self-identify as coming from a community, particular group, or tribe, you are acting as an ally. So, what does it mean to being an ally? Is allyship a noun? What are different forms of allyship?

Allyship Explained

Ally, or allyship, is not a self-claimed term. There are two distinguished characteristics of being an ally: first, allies aim to support social justice, which include promoting the rights of marginalized groups and eliminating social inequities and inequalities; and second, allies support (not lead) non-dominant groups of people through authentic relationship development and establish accountability with whom non-dominant people are seeking to ally themselves (Brown & Ostrove, 2013). Being an ally is a life-long commitment that recognizes systemic oppression and works actively towards social justice. Allyship is an integral part of anti-oppression practice that describes "active, consistent and arduous practice of unlearning and re-evaluating in which a person of privilege seeks to operate in solidarity with a marginalized group of people" (the Anti-Oppression Network, 2021).

Allyship is a verb and an active action to ensure everyone is treated fairly. For example, a woman employee Jean (she/her/hers) in a tech company is a marginalized person because the field of technology is both historically and presently male-dominated. Allyship in this hypothetical situation can include providing mentorship opportunity, amplifying Jean's voice in board meetings, advocating for her advancement in the workplace, speaking up when witnessing unfair treatment, and sponsoring opportunities for Jean to lead.

Keep in mind that allyship is not about recognition. Everyone makes mistakes in their journey to being a good ally. It is important to embrace feelings of uncomfortableness as we learn and unlearn our prejudices and biased thinking. Being humble, honest, and accountable for our actions is key in this process. You can practice your allyship skills in everyday life. However, it is important to avoid actions that are considered as performative allyship.

Video: 5 Tips For Being An Ally

Here is a short video (3:31) by writer, actress, and video blogger Franchesca Ramsey: 5 Tips For Being An Ally

To help you remember some key elements of being a good ally, Kayla Reed (2016), Executive Director of Action St. Louis, explains ALLY as an acronym. Please watch this short (2:12) video that outlines these key elements. The narration transcript may be found at the end of this chapter.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/ buildingcommunityintrotoedi/?p=92#oembed-1

Remembering these four actions – Always center the impacted, Listen and Learn from those who live in the oppression, Leverage your privilege, and Yield the floor – will help you to become a good ALLY.

Performative vs. Effective Allyship

Performative allyship, also known as optical allyship, describes superficial activism that serves only at the surface level to appear supportive or to preserve personal brand (Phillips, 2020). Performative allyship does not aim to make a conscious and genuine effort to dismantle systemic oppressions.

Performative allyship can be harmful because it maintains the status quo by excusing privileged people from making a real meaningful contribution to social justice. Here are some examples of what performative allyship could look like:

- Interacting only on social media using simple posts, images, hashtags, and/or retweets, without engaging with the underlying causes and complexities of the issue.

- Only expressing emotions, such as outrage, disbelief, surprise, or anger on social media without speaking up or saying anything new.

- Being oblivious to systemic inequity that is responsible for social issues and/or individualizing social tragedies, such as (focusing on?) a bad police officer rather than systemic racisms.

- Empty approval, admiration, and praise without willingness to follow further education, self-reflection or challenging your own actions.

- Only speaking up when being put on the spot to appear as an ally, and quieting down when conversations get difficult.

- Overexerting yourself or centering the narrative around you.

If you recognize some of these descriptions in your own behaviors, just know that social changes cannot happen with you beginning and ending your activism using a hashtag. As tough and uncomfortable as it

might be, you must challenge individual, institutional and systemic oppressions to actively engage in difficult conversations, which are necessary to address the root causes of social inequity. Embracing brave spaces is necessary to committing to do the work.

Brave space means moving folks outside their comfort zone by encouraging uncomfortable conversations to foster better or new understandings about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice issues. Moving from a Safe space to a Brave space means having learning environments where we could participate in the challenging work of authentic engagement about issues of identity, oppression, power, and privilege (Cook-Sather, 2016; Arao & Clemens, 2013). The word 'safe' is defined in the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary as "free from harm or risk; affording safety or security from danger, risk, or difficulty; unlikely to produce controversy or contradiction" (Safe, 2010). However, authentic learning about social justice "often requires the very qualities of risk, difficulty, and controversy that are defined as incompatible with safety" (Arao & Clemens, 2013). In other words, fostering conversations based on brave space guidelines allow us the freedom to admit that there are things we do not know about equity-deserving groups, but that there is room to ask questions and educate ourselves by listening to various perspectives from diverse lived experiences.

In addition to these general principles on effective allyship, you can also contribute to social justice through micro allyship, mentorship, and sponsorship.

Microallyship, Mentorship, and Sponsorship

Microallyship

The term microallyship is coined by the GitHub director of engineering Neha Batra that describes daily microtasks that everyone can do to grow and improve as an ally, that include the following areas:

- **Amplify** by mentioning, repeating, and citing someone's awesome work.

- **Attribute** by providing positive feedback to someone and to their supervisors in a team setting.

- **Volunteer** to take care of "office housework", such as ordering lunch, taking meeting minutes, sending meeting minutes, cleaning afterwards. It is important to note that women are more likely to be asked and be tasked with low-promotable tasks than men in mixed-sex groups, including office housework, writing a report, event planning, and/or serving on a committee (Babcock et al., 2017). Therefore, it is essential to micro-allies to step up and volunteer for administrative tasks.

- **Educate** yourself by gathering and learning from a more diverse crowd, such as following someone new on social media (Twitter, GitHub, LinkedIn, Medium,etc).

- **Ask** how to better support members of equity-deserving groups. You can also ask for feedback on how to be a better ally and on any particular ally action items you are working on.

Mentorship

Mentorship is one specific practice of allyship. A mentor describes someone with knowledge, experience, and wisdom that is beneficial to the growth and advancement of another person, also known as a mentee. Even though mentees directly benefit from the guidance and support from an experienced member of the community or workplace, mentors also benefit from building a trustworthy relationship, making a meaningful impact on another person, and learning from diverse experiences and perspectives that the mentee offers. Mentorship programs, with an EDI lens, can address and reduce individual, institutional, and systemic barriers and help marginalized members to reach their full potential. The reciprocal connection between mentor and mentee can also promote inclusivity and a sense of belonging within the organization.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship is another act of being an ally. Contrary to the personal connection between mentor and mentee, sponsors often act as publicists of their *protégés* and manage others' views on the sponsored individuals. Sponsorship is very effective at increasing positive visibility, network building and career advancement for

protégés. A sponsor is often a senior member who leverages their power and reputation to advocate for their *protégés'* success. Sponsors introduce their *protégés* to new networks and opportunities, champion their promotions, and are actively invested in advancing their career path (Chow, 2021).

Summary and Self-Reflection

Tip #7

Find ways to apply an anti-oppression lens in your daily activities.

Being an ally is a lifelong commitment that requires constant learning and unlearning. Good allyship skills are earned through hard work, continuous education, and self-reflection. Allyship is about action and impact, so you need to ensure that your words go beyond your keyboard to affect the real world. Always question yourself whether your actions are performative, or if you are actively supporting social groups that are being oppressed. Here is a little take home message for you to reflect on:

- Am I only active on social media?

- Have I been reading or self-educating with books, podcasts, or anti-oppression blogs?

- How can I contribute to meaningful initiatives, such as BIPOC-led charities and indigenous artists?

- Have I engaged in hateful speech or unconsciously supported hateful organizations?

- Can I spend some time to mentor or sponsor a young person?

- When was the last time I witnessed discrimination and what could I have done differently?

Keep in mind that being an effective ally does not happen overnight and that we all start somewhere. It is not about getting things perfect; it is about making an active effort to support marginalized groups, leveraging your privilege to make a meaningful impact. It's about learning from our mistakes and doing better next time. It's about moving forward without leaving anyone behind. Allyship can start with small actions. But a small action from everyone can be a big step towards social justice and equity. It takes all of us to recognize and act on oppressions that are happening every day.

Additional Resources

- [Dismantle Collective – White Allyship 101: Resources to Get to Work](#)
- [Guide To Allyship – What is an Ally?](#)
- [Forbes – Allyship – The Key To Unlocking The Power Of Diversity](#)
- [The Anti-Oppression Network – Allyship](#)

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Chapter 7 Divider: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

Figure 7.1 ALLY Animation: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

ALLY Video Transcript

Let's talk about how to be an ALLY.

Always center the impacted. Recognize the difference between intent and impact, and always ask how the impacted community wants to be supported.

Listen & learn from those who live in the oppression. Start the process of unlearning by challenging, reflecting, and acting on your biases and language. Make a conscious effort to educate yourself through workshops, courses, podcasts, books, and articles on social justice issues, and understand that your continuous learning is up to you and no one else.

Leverage your privilege. Actively acknowledge your privilege and make a genuine effort to leverage your position of power to combat systems of oppression. Challenge your privilege in your everyday life and ask how your experiences may differ if your identities change. Share your powers with those who were excluded and be an active bystander to intervene in oppressions.

Yield the floor. Speak less, listen more, and make room for oppressed individuals and social groups to rise and take the lead. Keep in mind that being an ally means that you need to resist the urge to offer your ideologies and opinions. You are working beside or working behind the people offering your support and resources, but you should never stand in front of the people.

Remembering these four actions – Always center the impacted, Listen and Learn, Leverage your privilege, and Yield the floor – will help you to become a good ALLY.

8. INTERRUPT OPPRESSION

In this chapter, we provide a brief overview on Canadian history and colonial oppressions that have happened on this land. We will provide a definition of what interrupting oppression means in EDI practice and discuss different intervening strategies to be an effective upstander.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Identify historical and contemporary racism in Canada;

2. Explore common considerations when creating an interruption; and

3. Identify strategies to interrupt systems of oppression.

Introduction

In previous chapters, we talked about intersectional oppression that describes acts or processes that repeatedly target the same people for harm just because they are members of a particular minority group. We explored different ways to address social disparities, such as unconscious bias training, inclusive language, and effective allyship. All of these actions involve embedding an anti-oppression lens because they recognize systems of oppression that manifest in our society, and encourage us to work proactively, consciously and continuously lift others up, to confront complex social inequities, to dismantle systemic barriers and to build a more equitable and inclusive future for all talents, instead of selected privileged ones. However, in order to become anti-oppression activists and interrupt oppression, we need to first acknowledge the history of racism in Canada, and our relationship with the land and the people who lived there before us.

Interrupting oppressions describes "an attempt to stop a present or future harmful behavior, model respectful words and actions, create a safer space, advocate for those oppressed by the behavior (self and/or others), and support those being harmed" (Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, 2018).

Harm is anything that undermines a person's dignity or minimizes their worth (Evans & Vaandering, 2016. pp. 80). Harm extends beyond interpersonal relationships and can be caused due to structural injustices.

Conflict consists of incompatible objectives between two or more people or groups (Bickmore, 1997). Conflicts are disagreements or problems, based on competing wishes and needs, and/or divergent belief systems or lack of trusting relationships, between individuals or groups (Bickmore, 2005). Conflicts are inevitable in daily life, but they are not necessarily violent. In

contrast, *violence* is intentional harm, which may (or may not) be a result or response to underlying conflicts.

Conflict Resolution is the informal or formal process that two or more parties use to find a solution to their dispute or conflict (Shonk, 2020)

Restorative Justice is a positive way of responding to harm, wrongdoing, injustice, or conflict by focusing on repairing the harm caused by the wrongful action(s) (UNODC, 2021). This type of justice "uses processes that aim to restore the well-being of people involved, as well as the agency, ownership, and decision-making power of those directly affected by the harmful event – victims, offenders, their supporters and the wider community" (Ibid). Restorative Justice emphasizes the restoration of respect, equality, and dignity to the relationships affected by wrongdoings (Evans & Vaandering, 2016). For instance, *talking circles*, originating from Indigenous cultures, contribute to address situations in which people are in conflict or cause each other significant harm, as well as nurture healthy relationships (Ibid, pp. 78).

Transformative Justice is a movement that relies on community resources to respond to harm and conflict – for the people and by the people (Lakshmi, Piepzna-Samarasinha, Dixon, 2020). For example, "health programs requiring ID can cause harm to undocumented people and keep such populations at a higher risk for health issues. A transformative justice response would look like community health care being provided by services where IDs are not necessary, such as seeing a doctor outside of a clinic" (The Mosaic Institute, 2021).

Historical and Contemporary Racism in Canada

Canada is a nation of immigrants that has a long colonial history with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples. The initial military and commercial alliance between Indigenous peoples and European explorers started from the first contact until late 18th century when these peaceful relationships turned violent, as the British Empire began to perceive themselves as a **superior** race, and a "civilization" in comparison to Indigenous peoples. This shifting relationship, and the consequent legislated assimilation, led to policies, laws and statues, such as the Indian Act, that denied First Nations, Métis and Inuit people' access and control of their own lands. In 1883, Residential Schools became the primary vehicle of "civilization" and "assimilation". Children were removed from their homes and were forbidden to speak their own traditional language, or express their culture, religion, and lifestyles (McCullough, 2017). Between 1857 and 1996, more than 150,000 First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children suffered isolation, denigration, physical and verbal abuses. Thousands died. The trauma and devastating legacy imposed by Residential Schools and colonialization on indigenous families and communities continues in the present (CCDI, 2020). However, acknowledging the past is only the beginning to combat institutional and systemic racism. We must work together to reconcile and decolonize the relationship between First Nations, Inuit, and Métis People and all levels of Canadian government.

Some additional examples of historical racism in Canada (CCDI, 2020):

1. Slavery and segregation: from 1628 to the 1880s, 3,000 enslaved African people were brought to Canada from the United States. Generations of African Canadians experienced segregation in employment, housing, schools, churches, restaurants, hospitals, and public transportation. The last segregated school in Ontario remained open until 1964.

2. Racial discrimination against Chinese people when they survived the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the enactment of $23 million in "head-taxes" that only applied to Chinese immigrants.

3. Detention and deportation of over 20,000 Japanese people during World War II. Many of them were Canadian citizens who were sent to internment camps.

4. Discriminatory immigration policies that favoured immigrations from the United Kingdom and Western Europe, but refused people from racialized countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. This "preferred" list of immigrants was in place until 1976 when Canada introduced a 'fairer' immigration policy.

5. Canada's history with antisemitism dates back to the late 1700s. In the twentieth century, there were rising incidents of antisemitism, including discrimination and restrictions during the Holocaust. For instance, in 1939 over 900 Jewish refugees aboard the MS St. Louis were denied entry to Canada; over 250 of them died from the Holocaust after deportation. In 2018, Jewish Canadians were targeted by

religion-motivated hate crimes more than any other group (Stats Can, 2018)

6. Canada's history has seen pervasive attitudes of Islamophobia toward individual Muslims or followers of Islam, including stereotypes, bias, and violent hate crimes (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2005). The mid-2010s saw some of the worst attacks on Muslims and their places of worship in Canada's history. For instance, a shooting took place in 2017 at the Islamic Cultural Centre in Quebec City, where six Muslims were killed and 19 more were injured (CBC News, 2017).

The history of racial discrimination continues to negatively impact racialized people, at social, economic, political and even environmental levels. For example, racialized youth not only have a higher unemployment rate of 23%, but they are disproportionally more likely to be working in lower wage jobs (Statistics Canada, 2021b). Racialized people are also under-represented in the trade labour markets, they are more likely to suffer hate crimes and discrimination, and to live in poverty (Statistics Canada, 2020a, 2021a, 2021b). Black people in particular are under-represented in post-secondary institutions (Statistics Canada, 2021a). To this day, members of the Black and Jewish population remain the primary target of police-reported hate crimes (Statistics Canada, 2021c).

The Ontario Human Rights Code in Fighting Discrimination and Harassment

As racial discrimination and other forms of oppressions (such as sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism) persist in our society, social justice activists and social movement advocates are always there to force change and to protect people of all identities. One of the main legal tools used to combat racial discrimination and harassment in Ontario is the Ontario Human Rights Code, which states that every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to: (1) service, goods, and facilities, (2) the occupancy of accommodation, (3) contracts; (4) accommodation; (5) employment; (6) vocational associations, such as memberships and occupational

association, and (7) freedom from harassment, without discrimination because of "age, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability" (Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19).

The Ontario Human Rights Commission and the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario oversees and reinforces the operation of the Ontario Human Right Code.

Interrupting Oppression: Guidelines

Oppression = Prejudice + Power

Anti-oppression describes different strategies, theories, actions, and practices that recognize oppressions that are constructed in our society, and actively work to dismantle the social and institutional inequalities (The Anti-Oppression Network). Anti-oppression is not only confronting oppressive behaviors such as exclusion, microaggression, unconscious biases, gender, or racial stereotypes, but to also confront ourselves on how we can leverage our privilege and power to become better allies and advocates for people of all identities. Keep in mind that since oppression can occur on individual, group, and systemic levels, anti-oppression actions should also have different levels.

To combat oppressions in an organization, and to create fair and inclusive environments, organizations can audit existing policies and practices. This could include:

- reviewing the organizational and workplace culture, such as communication materials and interpersonal relationships;
- collecting and analyzing data across all levels of the organization; and

- developing an anti-oppression strategy.

A strong anti-oppression strategy can ensure accountability and transparency that addresses systemic barriers and can actively, and effectively, push for cultural and structural changes. On an individual and interpersonal level, we can employ a restorative justice approach to interrupt oppression.

Key Considerations

Interrupting oppression is about creating positive (transformational) changes, so we need to be mindful about how to interrupt, intervene, question, or redirect a harmful conversation, as well as to how to respond when we are being interrupted. It is important to have empathy and compassion for others and for yourself. We all make mistakes, so we need to refrain from defensiveness and, instead, acknowledge the impacts we may have. Interruption is not an accusation, it is a **restorative** approach that provides an opportunity for people to take responsibility for their actions, learn from their mistakes and build awareness of the harm caused to repair it. Additionally, there are several considerations that could help us formulate a response:

- Consider the power differentials.

- Assess safety. Do you feel safe enough to speak out? Self-care is essential and requires no explanation.

- Consider the existing network and social relations. How will the interruption affect your relationship?

- Be sensitive of language and cultural differences.

- Know your objectives and the desired outcomes you would like to achieve after the interruption.

- What forms of interruption are best suited in this scenario? Does this require immediate action, or should this be addressed via an indirect message?

- Account for other barriers. It is normal to struggle and to fear making mistakes or doing something wrong. Interrupting oppression is hard, but it gets easier with practice.

Strategy Inventory

When people say and do oppressive things, we need to let them know what they did had a negative impact – on you and, potentially, on others. There are lots of ways to do this. When we choose a private moment for a one-on-one follow-up conversation after someone says or does something offensive, this is known as 'calling

someone in', as we're inviting them into dialogue with a goal of deepening their understanding and changing behaviour (Haslam, 2019).

When we deal with problem behaviour immediately and often publicly, this is referred to as 'calling someone out' (Haslam, 2019). The goal is to stop the oppressive behaviour in a way that is non-negotiable.

Here are a few strategies you can use to interrupt oppressive behaviours:

1. Use "I" statements and speak from your personal experience. For example, if you noticed someone used dated terminology in their communication, kindly share with them a personal story of a time when you were reminded that a word you used in a presentation was not very kind and could appear inappropriate to others.

2. Ask for clarity and request the question to be elaborated, "what did you mean by that?" or "can you elaborate a bit more?"

3. Provide an alternative, "I'd like to invite you to consider ..." or "I am curious to hear about your thoughts on ...".

4. Amplify and support other's interruptions.

5. Seek supports and solidarity from others. We all start somewhere. It's normal to feel overwhelmed, just know that you are not alone and keep learning.

6. Be open-minded and non-judgmental. Keep in mind that all good characters could have problematic behavior. It's a learning and unlearning practice.

7. Educate wherever you can and explain why certain behaviors are rooted in systems of oppression (e.g., racism, sexism, classism). For example, "I don't think this is an appropriate way of expressing your opinion because it approves toxic masculinity", or "I appreciate your attempt to humor, but jokes on racial stereotypes aren't funny because it diminishes the contributions and diverse perspectives that racialized folks bring to our society."

8. Validate positive comments, emotions, and values.

9. Invite folks to return to group guidelines created and remind them that "this isn't what we agreed to do/say or enact."

10. Be humble and interruptible.

Summary and Self-Reflection

Tip #8

Interrupt systems of oppression when you witness them operating to exclude, stigmatize, or normalize "othering" of equity-deserving folks.

Keeping in mind that even though we provided some strategies for you to consider when you engage in interrupting oppressions, the most important thing is to be present in the moment, to listen to your heart, and be genuine and kind with your words. There is no perfect interruption. Know that sometimes interruptions might not work, and the plans don't always lead to the desired outcomes, and that's OK. Interrupting oppression is like planting a seed. It could take a long time to germinate and to grow, but we must keep nurturing it.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/buildingcommunityintrotoedi/?p=100#h5p-7

Additional Resources

- Portland State University Workshop with Sally Eck: [Interrupting Oppression in Our Everyday Lives](#) (video)

- Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence. (2018). [Toolkit for Interrupting Oppression](#) [PDF]

- Seedtheway. (2018). [Interrupting Bias: Calling Out vs. Calling In](#) [PDF]

- Ontario Human Rights Commission. (2005, 2009). [Policy and Guidelines on Racism and racial discrimination](#) [PDF]

- [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#)

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Chapter 8 Divider: Open Learning and Educational Support, University of Guelph/graphic

9. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Democratic societies such as Canada require active participation of individuals to create a sense of community and belonging. Citizenship engagement, agency or active participation refer to the involvement of individuals in public life and affairs, as well as in identifying social injustices and systems of oppression, while considering non-violent alternative solutions and resources for action. In this chapter, we will discuss what citizenship engagement is, and we will explore how individual action can bring about and contribute to systemic and cultural changes that build community and civil societies.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Explain Conflict Transformation;
2. Explain Citizenship Engagement; and
3. Design a personal anti-oppression plan.

Introduction

In his *Little Book of Conflict Transformation* (2003) Jean Paul Lederach envisaged **social (conflict) transformation** as a person on a journey, comprised of head, heart, hands, legs, and feet. Watch this short (03:40) animation that explains Lederach's social transformation. The video transcript may be found at the end of this chapter.

> 🖻 *One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:* https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/buildingcommunityintrotoedi/?p=108#oembed-1

Conflict transformation is "to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflicts [including systems of oppression] as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase [equity] and justice in direct interaction and social structures and respond to real-life problems in human relationships". (Lederach, 2004, pp. 26).

Citizenship Engagement and Active Participation Explained

Citizenship engagement, agency or active participation consists of behaviors, attitudes, and actions that aim to improve a community and, ideally, to challenge social injustices. To put it simply, individuals are 'engaged' when they play an active role in defining issues, considering solutions, and identifying resources or priorities for action (CIHR, 2010). This includes the more *traditional political activities*, including voting, understanding the government structures, societal services, functions, and processes, as well as our civic rights and duties that exist beyond voting and elections (Evans, 2006). Active participation also includes engagement in *non-electoral political activities* in areas related to social justice, anti-oppression, and anti-racism. This involves, for instance, understanding what associations, unions, community projects, NGOs, or social movements operate outside formal politics, as well as engaging in the active process of volunteering or participating in any group or organization that are currently addressing a problem of our concern.

Allyship is an instance of citizenship engagement and active participation. However, allyship describes "active, consistent, and arduous practice of unlearning and re-evaluating in which a person of **privilege** seeks to operate in solidarity with a marginalized [or equity-deserving] group of people" (the Anti-Oppression Network, 2021). Allyship requires engagement.

Citizenship engagement is confronting apathy, and indifference towards civic, social injustices and political issues. Unfortunately, academic research shows that many young people from marginalized contexts are unable, or discouraged, to constructively voice and defend their own interests, concerns and needs, which increases patterns of structural/systemic, cultural, and *violence* in their contexts (CEDAE, 2013). This barrier is connected to the insufficiency of educational opportunities to develop the critical thinking needed for understanding ways to actively participate in collective decision-making procedures (Quaynor, 2012; Reimers & Cárdenas, 2010). Thus, citizenship engagement or active participation requires us to learn, and develop a set of knowledge and skills that allow us to understand and act, for instance, against systems of oppression affecting equity-deserving groups.

Following Lederach's framework (2003), Our **head** – that part of our body where our understandings of our world are developed— needs opportunities to learn multiple viewpoints and perspectives within our society (Hess, 2009), including the underlying historical, social, or economic root causes of social injustices and power imbalances existing in our context (Bickmore, 2008), as well as the structures, practices and policies that contribute to institutionalize systems of oppression. Within this framework, our head also requires spaces to develop our ability to analyze and synthesize information and arguments (Carretero, Haste, & Bermudez, 2016).

Our **heart**, the center of our human relationships, needs learning opportunities to question our unconscious biases, stereotypes, microaggressions, as well as learning spaces to exploring questions of unequal power and privilege.

Our **hands** require spaces to discuss, problem-solve and experiment with alternative perspectives that may oppose to oppression and transform local and global injustices, as opportunities to reflect on our own capacities and agency for social transformation (Bickmore, 2014; Diazgrandos & Noonan, 2015).

Finally, our **legs and feet**, or capacities to engage in active processes, requires us to learn how to organize, set goals and collaborate with others to challenge systemic oppression (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Further, it requires us to know who is doing anything to address a systemic issue at the governmental, non-governmental or association levels. Further, we need to develop our capacities to voice our needs, as well as ensuring representation or participatory parity in political claims-making (Fraser, 2008; 2009).

Video: Citizen Participation

Watch this short video (3:57) from Zentrum fir politesch Bildung: Citizen Participation

Design a Personal Anti-Oppression Action Plan

What Can I Do?

This chapter is an opportunity for you to reflect on your own agency by designing an action plan to address any kind of system of oppression that you know is affecting equity-deserving groups.

To guide you through this process, think about **one or two** issues that concern you.

What makes you angry, frustrated, or sad?

What makes you hopeful or moves you to act?

What would you like to change? (In your community, university, or workplace).

Take a moment to reflect on these questions:

- What am I doing to challenge racism?
- What am I doing to challenge colonial violence?
- What am I doing to end homophobia and transphobia?
- What am I doing to end sexism?
- What am I doing to end ableism?

Now, choose one or two topic(s) (i.e., Anti-Black Racism), and write down **why you are concerned about the topic(s)**?

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Brainstorming

Let's brainstorm some ideas by taking the time to explore what you know, or what you need to explore further by doing your own research (adapted from The Mosaic Institute, 2020).

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Create a Personal Action Plan

Now that you have taken the time to reflect on the problem(s) that most concerns you, it is time to start designing your action plan by following 4 steps (Adapted from The Mosaic Institute, 2020). When you have completed all the steps, you may export your input as a printable document.

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Summary and Self-Reflection

Tip #9

Create a personal action plan to interrupt systems of oppression.

The change(s) you wish to see in the world begins with learning, unlearning, and questioning the systems of oppression that impact various individuals and social groups. Knowledge is key to understanding multiple realities, and active participation contributes to social transformation. Here is a little take-home message for you to reflect on:

- Am I acting to challenge systems of oppression?

- Am I willing to operationalize my designed action plan?

- What do I know now that I did not know before?

Please know that individual actions can lead to meaningful personal, interpersonal, and even cultural changes, but only when we engage with people and systems beyond our personal lives, can we see transformations in systems and institutions. To create systemic change, we need politicians to listen, and we need to work collaboratively with advocacy, allyship and awareness groups.

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Conflict Transformation Video Transcript

In his *Little Book of Conflict Transformation* Jean Paul Lederach envisaged social conflict transformation as a person on a journey, comprised of head, heart, hands, legs, and feet.

The **head** refers to the understandings and conceptual views of systemic issues affecting societies, which he describes as conflicts, as well as the attitudes, perceptions, and capabilities to envision alternatives to challenge such issues. In other words, the head includes how we think about systemic issues and the potential solutions we may imagine.

Our **heart** represents the center of our emotions, intuitions, and human relationships. Our heart is how we relate with others. However, the way we relate and perceive others is deeply influenced by our cultural narratives, beliefs, and social structures. For Lederach (2004) our feelings and humanness (heart) allow us to stop, assess, take notice, and self-reflect on our relationships, while focusing on the less visible dimensions of our inequitable interactions.

Our **hands** represent "that part of the body capable of building things, able to touch, feel, and affect the shape that things take. Hands bring us close to practice. When we say 'hands-on', we mean that we are close to where the work takes place" (Ibid, pp. 27). Our hands have the potential to build constructive and positive changes to improve relationships and to work on individual, cultural and systemic transformations. To build change we need to ask ourselves, for instance, how can systemic oppressions be transformed? How can societies move in a constructive, equitable, anti-racist and anti-oppression direction? A transformational lens sees "the generation of creative 'platforms' as the mechanism to address [systems of oppression], while also working to change social structures, practices and [cultural beliefs]" (Ibid, pp. 27).

Finally, our legs and feet represent what we do, it is the place where thought and heartbeat translate into response, direction, and momentum to address systems of oppression. Legs and feet refer to our capacities to engage in active processes at all levels of relationships: interpersonal, inter-group, and social-structural or systemic. Legs and feet mean identifying, pursuing, and creating change through individual and collective actions to increase justice and allyship. Thus, a transformational view believes that dialogue, active participation, and representation are necessary ingredients for addressing social injustices, which are based

on the socio-historical construction of inequitable practices and procedures among institutions, structures, cultural narratives, and even human relationships.

10. COMMIT TO DEEPENING YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

Welcome to the last chapter of this introductory book on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. In this chapter, we synthesize concepts and guidelines discussed in previous chapters and introduce the concept of accessibility and invite you to self-explore some topics that were not covered in this book. We will provide you with some additional resources that could help your continuous learning.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Explain what accessibility is and how to better accommodate people with accessibility needs;

2. Explore some of the barriers to accessibility; and

3. Plan ways to continue your EDI learning.

Introduction

Pushing for social change is a lifelong journey of commitment that requires learning and unlearning about lived experiences that differ from your own. Throughout this material, we covered some fundamental topics on social inequity that included Privilege (Chapter. 1) and Intersectional Oppression (Chapter. 2). We discussed the psychology of conscious and unconscious biases and how to act on them (Chapters 3 and 4). We filled the remainder of this book with actionable practices and guidelines that would allow you to be a better advocate for social and institutional changes, such as how to recognize and avoid common pitfalls in EDI practice (Chapter. 5), the usage of neutral and inclusive language (Chapter 6), effective allyship (Chapter 7), the importance of oppression interruption (Chapter 8) and ways to operationalize your actions (Chapter 9). Here, we synthesize some key EDI principles that you can reflect on in your everyday life. However, this should only be the beginning of your continuous learning.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion are key elements of social justice. **Equity** means recognizing that there are individuals and groups who encounter individual, interpersonal, institutional, and systemic barriers to full participation. As we saw, systemic inequities, or barriers, may manifest in multiple forms, including unconscious biases, assumptions, perceptions, or stereotypes. These systemic barriers are particularly noticeable in systems, policies, practices, and procedures that impede the full recognition and participation of equity-deserving groups in the full range of activities across society and institutions.

Diversity is the collection of peoples with different identity characteristics, ways of knowing, and ways of being. The diversity of identities is articulated in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* as age, color, ancestry, disability, ethnic origin, family status, gender identity or expression, marital status, race, sex, and sexual orientation, citizenship, creed, and place of origin. However, Diversity also means different ways of knowing, thinking, or learning, legal status, education, or backgrounds. Thus, Diversity is about recognizing the many perspectives and lived experiences that contribute to our society, communities, and institutions.

Finally, **Inclusion** means that all members of our society are respected, valued, and empowered. The evolving

nature of social work requires us to constantly update our vocabularies to be inclusive. Inclusivity is not a means to an end, but a method and a principle of how we handle our daily interaction, what language we use, and how to better accommodate and support others with accessibility needs. As national and provincial legislations starting to update their accessibility standards, issues surrounding accessibility are increasingly recognized as a key aspect of EDI work and of social justice.

Accessibility

Ontario is home to 13 million residents, 200 languages, and has the largest Indigenous population in this country (Ontario Public Service, 2021). Yet, 1 in 7 Ontarians has a disability that limits their full access to physical spaces, products, programs, services and/or employment opportunities. Similarly, people with disabilities, racialized visible minorities, Indigenous and LGBTQ2SIA+ members remain to experience the highest levels of discrimination in their workplace (Ontario Public Service, 2021). To ensure that all Ontarians can fully participate in all aspects of society, the government of Ontario was the first province in Canada to have passed provincial accessibility legislation, known as the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA). This Act, which applies to government, business, non-profits, and public sector organizations, includes accessibility standards that aim to identify, prevent, and remove barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities in areas of daily life.

Accessibility , n, is an umbrella term that describes "the degree to which a product, device, service, or environment is available to be used by all intended audiences" (AODA, 2016).

Barrier, n, broadly describes "anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice" (AODA, 2016).

Table 10.1 Five Barriers to Accessibility (Council of Ontario Universities, 2017., Greg, 2019., Thomson, 2019)

Category	Attitudinal	Organizational	Physical or Architectural	Information or Communication	Technological
Definition	Behaviours, perceptions, and assumptions that discriminate against persons with disabilities, often developed from a lack of understanding	Policies, procedures, or practices that unfairly discriminate and can prevent individuals from participating fully in a situation	Elements of buildings or outdoor spaces that create barriers to persons with disabilities	Barriers to both sending and receiving information for people with sensory disabilities, such as hearing, seeing, or learning disabilities	A device or technological platform is not accessible to its intended audience and cannot be used with an assistive device
Example	Assuming that people with a disability are inferior. Consider your accommodation as a form of a "special favor"	No alternative method to interact with people, to learn, or to access resources Ambiguous content objectives	While using a Wheelchair you encounter unfriendly sidewalks and doorways Slippery ramps during the rain Lack of accessible washrooms	Insufficient color contrast No video caption or transcriptions Small fonts	Non-accessible features, such as Alt text Failed facial recognitions Software compatibility
Action	Unconscious bias training Self-learning Being an ally: Call in or Call out	Incorporate flexibility Internal audit and survey Identify and address on barriers that may affect equity-deserving groups (not an individual level, but at an institutional level)	Structural Updates Prioritize accessibility needs during the winter and harsh weather events	Consider color-blindness Always provide captions Provide complementary lectures or meeting notes	Ensure accessible content Broad compatibility with different devices, operating systems, and software

Video: Accessibility is a Human Right

Watch this short video (2:25) from the Canadian Human Rights Commission – CHRC: [Accessibility is a Human Right](#)

Summary and Additional Resources

Tip #10
Commit to a lifelong journey of learning and unlearning about lived experiences different from your own.

Accessibility is a broad topic, and it requires more exploration and learning on your own. Be mindful that there are multiple types of disabilities that can be visible or invisible, chronic or temporary.

Remember that inclusivity is about inviting everyone to the table, regardless of their identity. The work we do in social justice and EDI practice is not about flipping the power or dragging anyone down, it is about lifting up others who are historically and presently undermined, ignored, and unaccounted-for. It is about building a society for all talents not for selective privileges. It is about fostering a sense of belonging, welcoming

diverse identities, and perspectives, and supporting each other. It is about creating safe space free of judgement, discrimination, and assaults so everyone can heal, rest, grow, and flourish.

We should constantly challenge our biases and reflect on our behaviors. We should continue our learning on our own without relying on others to teach us. We should make a conscious effort to appreciate different cultures and traditions that are present in our society. We should be sensitive of our language and our actions. We should always be open to being interrupted and capable to call in when seeing unfair treatments. The fabric of our community is only as strong as the individual threads that bind us together.

To help you get started on your learning we created the following resource list and we invite you to initiate your own community of practice to explore some of these topics.

Allyship

- Batra, N. (2019). Microallyship

- Dismantle Collective. (2019). White Allyship 101: Resources to Get to Work

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APPENDIX: EDI POSTER

The following infographic is available as a **downloadable accessible PDF file**.

10 WAYS WE CAN EMBED EDI
IN OUR COMMUNITY

1. PRIVILEGE

Acknowledge your privilege and your perspectives on EDI work.

2. RECOGNIZE INTERSECTIONAL OPPRESSION

Recognize how systems of oppression create barriers to full participation.

3. ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR BIASES

Recognize the importance of taking the lead of equity-deserving groups.

4. ADDRESS YOUR BIASES

Identify and address how unconscious bias contributes to systems of oppression.

5. CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

Celebrate equity-deserving folks without tokenizing or appropriating culture.

6. INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Use inclusive language and monitor changing EDI language.

7. ALLYSHIP

Find ways to apply an anti-oppression lens in your daily activities.

8. INTERRUPT OPPRESSION

Interrupt systems of oppression when you witness them operating to exclude, stigmatize, or normalize "othering" of equity-deserving folks.

9. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Create a personal action plan to interrupt systems of oppression.

10. COMMIT TO DEEPENING YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

Commit to a lifelong journey of learning and unlearning about lived experiences different from your own.

Figure A.1 "10 Ways We Can Embed EDI in our Community" [See image transcript below.]

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Image Transcript

Figure A.1 10 Ways We Can Embed EDI in our Community

1. Privilege
   Acknowledge your privilege and your perspectives on EDI work.

2. Recognize Intersectional Oppression
   Recognize how systems of oppression create barriers to full participation.

3. Acknowledge Your Biases
   Recognize the importance of taking the lead of equity-seeking groups.

4. Address Your Biases
   Identify and address how unconscious bias contributes to systems of oppression.

5. Celebrate Diversity
   Celebrate equity-deserving folks without tokenizing or appropriating culture.

6. Inclusive Language
   Use inclusive language and monitor changing EDI language.

7. Allyship
   Find ways to apply an anti-oppression lens in your daily activities.

8. Interrupt oppression

   Interrupt systems of oppression when you witness them operating to exclude, stigmatize, or "other" equity-deserving folks.

9. Active Participation

   Create a personal action plan to interrupt systems of oppression.

10. Commit to Deepening Your Knowledge and Understanding

    Commit to a lifelong journey of learning and unlearning about lived experiences different from your own.

TRANSCRIPT AND DEFINITIONS: LGBTQ2SIA+ WORD CLOUD

Agender/Genderless: Someone who is without gender, gender neutral, and/or rejects the concept of gender for themselves (Mardell, 2017).

Aggressive: An identity in Black communities for women who present and behave in masculine ways, and who partner with women; this term should only be used by Black individuals (Wilson, 2009).

Androgyne: A non-binary gender in which a person is "*both* a man and woman, *neither* a man nor woman, and/or *somewhere in between* man and woman" (Mardell, 2017; p. 133).

Aporagender: Someone whose gender is neither that of a woman, man or anything in between but who still feels they have a very strong and specific gendered feeling (Kelly, 2016).

Bigender: "Someone who has/experiences two genders" – these may be experienced at the same time or fluctuate (Mardell, 2017; p. 108).

Butch: "Used as both a noun and an adjective, this refers to a person who identifies as masculine (either physically, mentally or emotionally). The term is occasionally used as a lesbian slur but has been reclaimed by some gay women and turned into an affirmative label" (Kelly, 2016).

Chicanx: A gender-inclusive and/or neutral term for someone who is from Mexico, and lives in the United States (Avila, 2016; Planas, 2012).

Cisgender man: A person who knows themselves to be a man, after having been assigned male at birth.

Cisgender woman: A person who knows themselves to be a woman, after having been assigned female at birth.

Demigender: A person with a partial connection to a certain gender; usually demigirl (partially identifying as a girl) or demiboy (partially identifying as a boy).

Enby: Shortform, slang (and sometimes endearing) term for a non-binary person (derived from the pronunciation of the short form of non-binary, 'nb').

Fa'afafine: A third gender in Samoa; these individuals are an important part of Samoan culture.

Femme: "Used by and for anybody who identifies as feminine, but more commonly associated with feminine-identifying gay women" (Kelly, 2016).

Filipinx: Specifically for individuals from the Philippines. An identity term that is inclusive of individuals of all gender identities (FIERCE, n.d.).

Gender Nonconforming/Gender Variant/Gender Diverse/Gender Expansive: A person who does not conform to the concept of gender either in their gender identity and/or in their gender expression. These individuals may or may not also identify as trans and/or non-binary (Because I Am Human, 2017).

Gender Questioning: Someone who is unsure of, or exploring, their gender identity.

Genderfluid: Someone whose gender identity fluctuates between different genders and is not fixed.

Genderflux: "Someone whose experience with gender changes (fluctuates) in intensity" (Mardell, 2017; p. 127).

Genderqueer: "Someone whose gender exists outside of or beyond society's binary concept of gender, often by not conforming to it" (Mardell, 2017; p. 120).

Gendervague: A gender identity that is highly influenced by being neurodivergent and feels undefinable or partly definable because of one's neurodivergence.

Graygender: "Someone who has a weak sense of gender and/or is somewhat apathetic about their gender identity/expression" (Mardell, 2017; p. 144-145).

Hijra: A third gender in India legally recognized by the Supreme Court of India. Individuals assigned male at birth who appear as women and take on other traditional roles and power in Indian culture (for example, they are believed to have fertility enhancing powers) (Reddy, 2005).

Intergender: A person who identifies "between or as a mix of the binary genders"; some see this identity as exclusively reserved for Intersex individuals (Mardell, 2017; p. 143).

Khanith: This term is specific to Oman; Khanith is a third sex category in Oman describing men who have sex with other men and behave in a more feminine way (Ilkkaracan, 2016).

Latinx: Specifically for Latin American individuals. An identity term that is inclusive of queer, non-binary, and gender non-conforming individuals (Rodriguez-Cayro, 2019). Also, an umbrella term used when you do not know the gender identities of a group of people you are talking about (Rodriguez-Cayro, 2019).

Maverique: "Someone who has an autonomous gender which exists entirely independent of the binary genders man and woman" (Mardell, 2017; p. 115).

Neutrois: "Someone whose gender is neutral or null" (Mardell, 2017; p. 140).

Non-binary: Both a specific gender identity and an umbrella term. Non-binary describes individuals who do not exclusively or wholly identify as men or as women (binary genders).

Polygender: Someone who identifies as more than one gender.

RaeRae and Mahu: Both RaeRae and Mahu are terms for individuals in Polynesian culture who are neither men nor women, but someone who is partially a man and partially a woman (Stip, 2015). These individuals were seen as an important part of the Polynesian community however colonization has affected this relationship (Stip, 2015). Someone who is RaeRae may have had hormone therapy or gender affirming surgeries, whereas the term Mahu is more exclusively about the role the individuals have in Polynesian culture (Stip, 2015).

Stud: An identity in Black communities for women who present and behave in masculine ways, and whom partner with women; this term should only be used by Black individuals (Wilson, 2009).

Third Gender: A term used in many non-Western cultures for people who do not identify as either a man or a woman.

Trans man: A person who knows themselves to be a man, after having been assigned male at birth.

Trans person: A person who knows themselves to be trans, after having been assigned male or female at birth.

Trans woman: A person who knows themselves to be a woman, after having been assigned male at birth.

Transfeminine: "A term used to describe someone who was assigned male at birth, and who has a predominantly feminine gender and/or expresses themselves in a way they describe as feminine. While feminine people feel a connection to femininity, they may not identify in part or in whole as female" (Mardell, 2017; p. 105).

Transmasculine: "A term used to describe someone who was assigned female at birth, and who has a predominantly masculine gender and/or expresses themselves in a way they describe as masculine. While transmasculine people feel a connection to masculinity, they may not identify in part or in whole as male" (Mardell, 2017; p. 104).

Trigender: "Someone who has/experiences three genders" (Mardell, 2017; p. 108).

Two-Spirit: An Indigenous term for someone who does is not straight and/or cisgender. This is an umbrella term and has different meanings depending on the Indigenous individual, nation, region and/or territory.

Xenogender: Umbrella term for non-binary genders that are not defined by characteristics related to male or female.

X-jendā: A Japanese word for transgender individuals who identify as neither men nor women; it is a broadly encompassing word open for individual interpretation (Dale, 2012).

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