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Laura P. Minero, PhD

# Praxis of Intersectionality: Examining our Axes of Power and Oppression to Support Our Anti-Racist Work and Cultural Responsiveness

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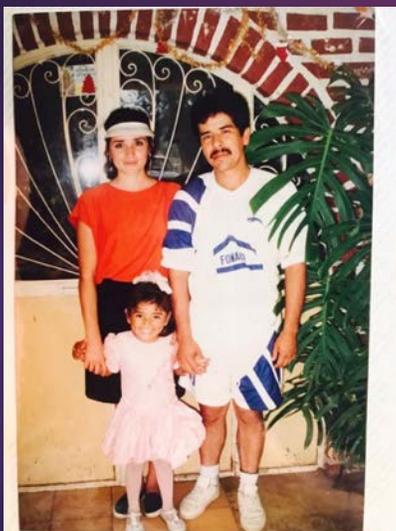


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## Positionality



Others have the privilege to learn about and study discrimination and oppression, without experiencing it their whole life. I find myself at various intersections of oppression and simultaneously using my privilege to shed light on these injustices and inequality.



Photograph by Michael T. Sullivan

## Purpose and Goals



Increase participants awareness of their axes of power and oppression



Learn how intersectional awareness can strengthen our anti-racist work and cultural responsiveness



Explore issues of intersectionality in a brave and experiential space



Learn from one another's narratives



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## “Brave Space” Group Efforts

Expectations for Participation



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## Shifting how we approach cultural competency

- ▶ **Cultural responsiveness** is the ability to learn from, relate and respond sensitively with people from your and other cultural backgrounds
- ▶ Utilizing cultural responsiveness as a tool within your positions of leadership/service can help deepen and strengthen relationships
- ▶ It conveys that you take personal investment and care in learning about how to best serve your organizations and communities' needs



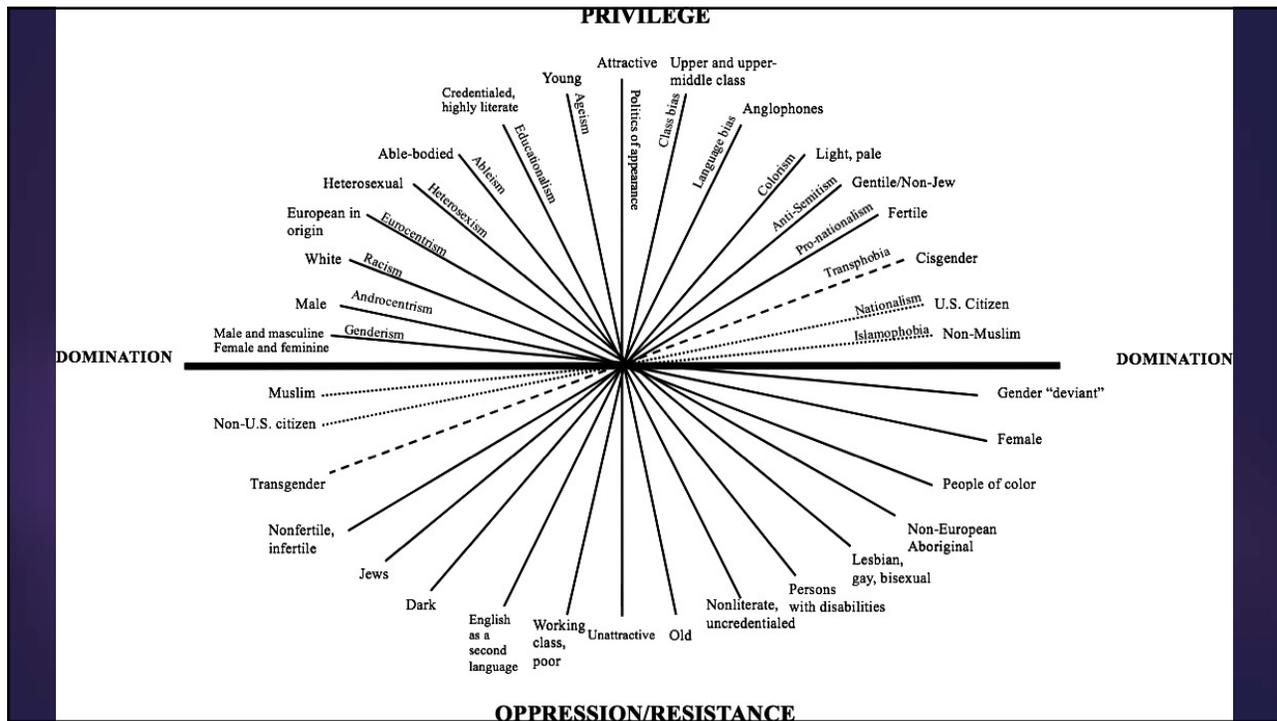
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## Various Forms of Intersectionality

- ▶ Racism
- ▶ Sexism, Transphobia
- ▶ Homophobia, Heteronormativity
- ▶ Classism
- ▶ Agism
- ▶ Ableism
- ▶ Example: A gay man may experience homophobia. A Black man may experience racism. But a Black gay man will likely experience homophobia **and** racism (often at the same time). It is also possible for him to experience racism inside the LGBT community and homophobia in the Black community.



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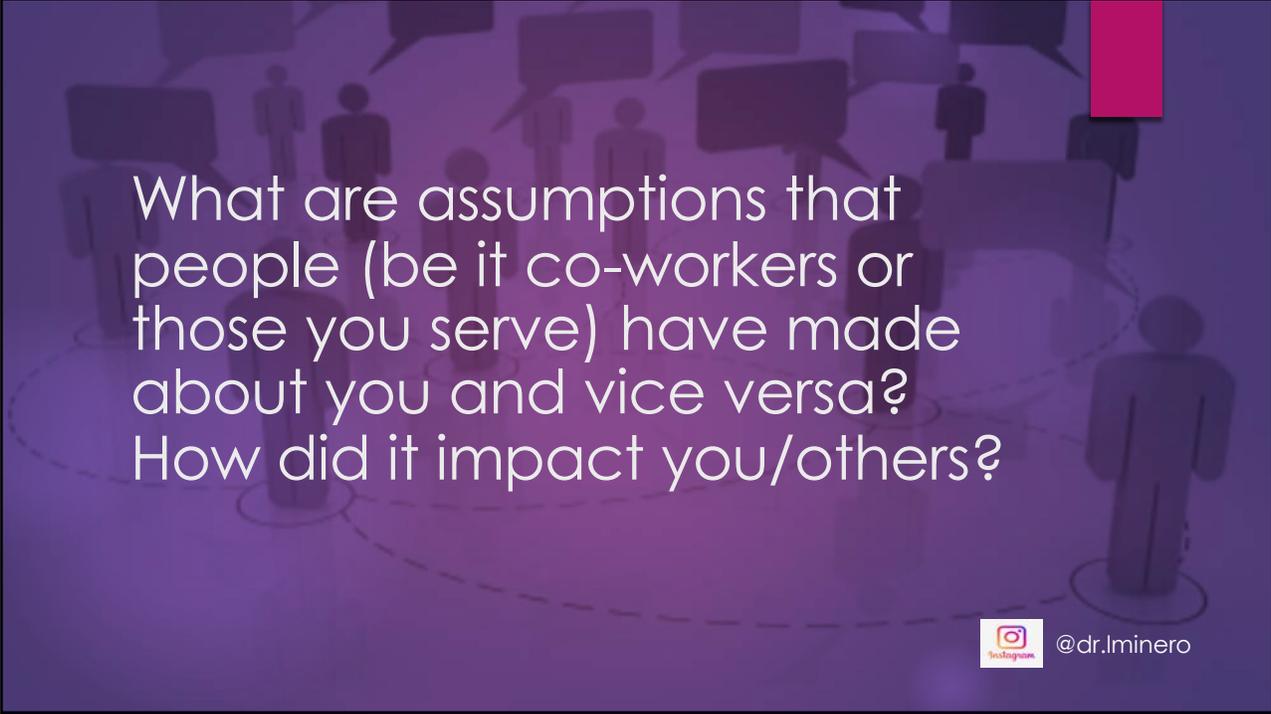


# Shifting from normalizing abuse

▶ "I do not use "microaggression" anymore. I detest the post-racial platform that supported its sudden popularity. I detest its component parts—"micro" and "aggression." A persistent daily low hum of racist abuse is not minor. I use the term "abuse" because aggression is not as exacting a term. Abuse accurately describes the action and its effects on people: distress, anger, worry, depression, anxiety, pain, fatigue, and suicide."

Dr. Ibram X. Kendi

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What are assumptions that people (be it co-workers or those you serve) have made about you and vice versa? How did it impact you/others?



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## Anti-racist and Cultural Responsive Skills

- 1. Learn about yourself**
- 2. Check your axes of power and privilege**
3. Attend anti-racist and social justice focused conferences/trainings
4. Allocate resources to organize trainings at your organization
5. Seek accountability for your actions and take responsibility



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## Increasing our understanding of ourselves and others

- ▶ Through introspection and "deep digging"
- ▶ Recognition of our feelings, emotions, and how these contribute to our present sense of self
- ▶ Paying close attention to how our identities are **multilayered**, how they may **intersect**, or **parallel** other aspects of our identities
- ▶ Acknowledge the **privilege** that is granted with some of our identities and how we may be dominating/oppressing others
- ▶ Reflecting on how different events and experiences in our life influence our thinking, knowledge, and way of engaging with others and the world



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## Identity Activity

## Processing

- ▶ What was it like to do this activity?
- ▶ What did you notice from others' narratives that made you think about your own **privilege**?
- ▶ Was race/ethnicity a big factor in answering the proposed questions? Why or Why not? How about gender? Why or why not? How about sexual orientation? Age? Hidden identity?
- ▶ What are some of the commonalities you noticed having with others?
- ▶ What are some of the ways you differed from each other? What can we learn from our differences and similarities?
- ▶ Why is learning about each other in this way important for our personal/profession work?
- ▶ What came up for you as you listened to others?



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## Conclusion

- ▶ Developing cultural responsiveness is a lifelong process
- ▶ The work starts by examining yourself
- ▶ Have an open and flexible mind and find people to hold you accountable to consistent growth
- ▶ Be compassionate and understanding towards yourself and others, but set boundaries when nescesary
- ▶ Approach cultural responsiveness as a bi-directional process, learning happens both ways
- ▶ Check your biases, privilege and use the strength of your relationship to support and work though mishaps (which WILL happen, but you are responsible for how often)
- ▶ Remember you can by racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, etc one moment, and not the next
- ▶ Remember that those we serve as well as those we work with, can long be impacted by their experiences of domination (racism, transphobia, classism, etc.) with you



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Thank you! Please connect with me!

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