



SOCIAL JUSTICE 101: POWER, OPPRESSION, AND PRIVILEGE

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OKAY...SO WHAT IS SOCIAL JUSTICE?

- Justice in terms of the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society.
- The ideas of: human rights; dignity; political, economical, social, and other equality; equal distribution of resources; justice; use of policy and laws; removing inequality; societal participation in change; personal responsibility; and creating access to opportunity and chance through action, etc.



WHY IS SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPORTANT?

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

- Privilege - a right or immunity granted as a peculiar benefit, advantage, or favor, such a right or immunity attached specifically to a position or an office.
- Oppression - unjust or cruel exercise of authority or power
- Intersectionality - The idea that multiple identities *intersect* to create a whole identity that is different from it's individual components.



PRIVILEGE

- Examples?
- Privilege in everyday life....what does it look like?
- Let's talk about privilege and how that shapes our worldviews. How does it allow/disallow us to navigate/negotiate spaces?

LEVELS OF OPPRESSION

- Individual

- Attitudes, beliefs, individual behavior, interpersonal interactions, etc.
- Ex: Locking your car door when a person of color walks by
 - Refusing to call someone by their pronouns or name
 - Parents gender policing their children. "Boys don't cry."
 - Acting defensively/aggressively when someone points out racism, homophobia, sexism, transphobia, xenophobia, Islamaphobia, ableism, etc.

LEVELS OF OPPRESSION CONT.

- Institutional

- Housing, employment, education, government laws, legal/criminal justice system
- Ex: Bathroom bills
 - African American and Hispanic/Latinx comprised 58% of all prisoners in 2008, even though they make up approximately only one quarter of the US population
 - People of color are paid less than white people for equivalent jobs and education rates

LEVELS OF OPPRESSION CONT.

- Cultural

- Values, norms, needs, language, logic systems, societal expectations
 - Ex: Myth that those of lower-social economic status are lazy, unmotivated, haven't worked hard enough
 - Myth of gender binary
 - Myth of static and fixed gender roles
 - Cultural and historical narratives that associate white European cultures as "civilization," having more "order and advancement" than cultures comprised of mostly people of color



INTERSECTIONALITY

- Why is it important?

WHAT DO WE DO WITH THIS INFORMATION?

- Make our spaces more inclusive
- Advocacy
- Activism

WHAT IS AN INCLUSIVE SPACE?

- One in which everyone feels safe, supported, included, and encouraged
- Where equitable access, dignity and safety for all individuals is normative and of the utmost importance.

SO, HOW TO WE CREATE INCLUSIVE SPACES?

- Multiple and intersecting identities are acknowledged and valued.
- Language is inclusive.
- Include as much information as possible about your space's accessibility features
- Acknowledge and own up to our shortcomings
- Hold everyone accountable for advancing the empowerment of all people, and not just people like them.
- Inclusion is about a varied group of people sharing ownership
- Inclusion is not built by “not seeing color” or thinking that “gender doesn't matter”
- Inclusive environments are shaped by empathy and allow us to be frank, honest, and open.



TO LEAVE YOU WITH SOME QUOTES

“It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.” –
Audre Lorde

“I am deliberate and afraid of nothing.” –Audre Lorde



THANK YOU!

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