

Exploring Social Identities, Dominant Power Systems & Health Beliefs Workbook

The Interagency Committee of State Employed Women (ICSEW)
Professional Development Conference
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BALANCE

HEALTH

HABITS

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Exploring Social Identities, Dominant Power Systems, Health & Body Beliefs

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Part I: Understanding our Social Identities

Examining the ways our social identities are affected by dominant power structures IN ADDITION to understanding why certain social identities inherently have closer proximity to power and therefore benefit from these structures can help us better understand the gaps in the current narrative around "health" and "wellbeing"

PAUSE AND REFLECT

Identifying your social identities

Race

Assigned Sex at Birth

Gender

Sexual Orientation

Ethnicity

Religion

Disability/Ability Status

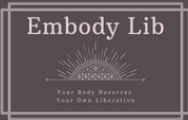
Primary Language

Body Size

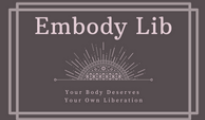
Socioeconomic Class

National Origin

Neurodiversity



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Part I: Examining our Social Identities

Now that you have identified of your some social identities, answer the questions below.

JOURNAL PROMPT:

Which social identities are you most aware or conscious of in your everyday life? Which ones are you least aware or conscious of?

JOURNAL PROMPT:

What do you appreciate about or gain from each identity?
What is the most negative or difficult thing about each identity you named?

Our social identities and how we are treated based on these identities are largely impacted by dominant systems and structures that are embedded into our societal fabric.

These systems and structures impact our lived experiences and as a result dictate many of our thoughts and beliefs about who and what is healthy and how to achieve wellbeing.

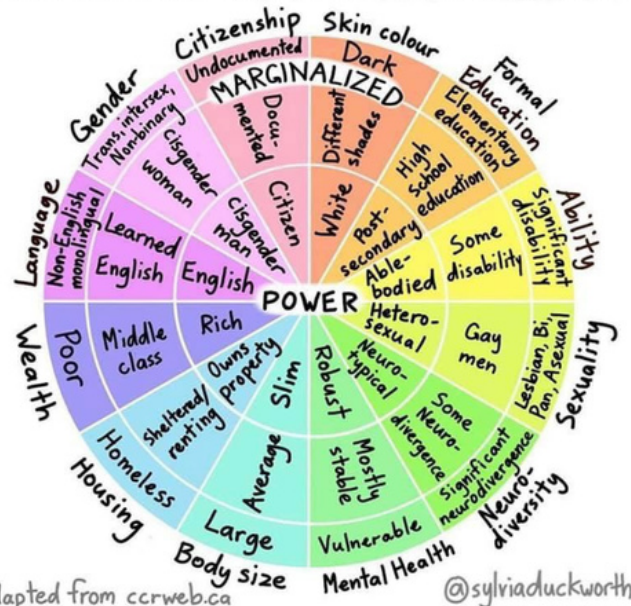
Part II: Examining Power Systems and the 'Norm'

What does it mean to be in close proximity to power?

When looking at society, we can identify who is in closest proximity to power by examining who has the fewest barriers in accessing the most number of resources, who is in charge of making societal decisions, and who shapes ideas about how things "should be". Those in closest proximity to power often define the 'norm'.

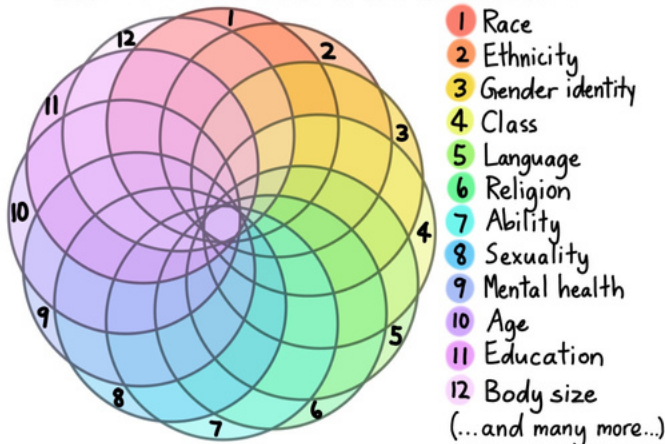
Our country's history as well as current events can tell us a lot about which social identities have 'power'. As you see in this graphic here, a groups social identity can lead them closer to the center of a power structure or further away from it, so much so where they are 'marginalized'

WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



Source: Sylvia Duckworth Instagram Account

INTERSECTIONALITY



Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it locks and intersects. It is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.
- Kimberlé Crenshaw -

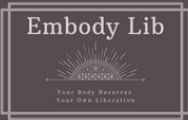
Source: Sylvia Duckworth Instagram Account

Your lived experiences (your thoughts, beliefs, choices and how we are treated) are shaped by how these social identities INTERSECT

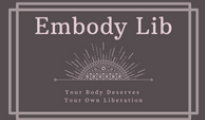
As you can see in the graphic to the left, one aspect of our identity seldom acts independently of other aspects. Rather, different aspects of our identity overlap with one another to shape a unique experience for each of us.

Both of these graphics can help us explore where different domains of our social identities intersect with one another to shape our lived experiences and pinpoint where our beliefs about nutrition, health and wellbeing might come from.

NOTE: These two visuals don't fully capture or define who you are, and doing so is not the goal, either. Almost all of us have some experiences of privilege and some of marginalization, and these experiences are relative.



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Part II: Examining Power Systems and the 'Norm'

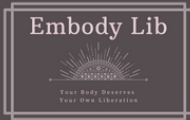
After reviewing, the social identities you named on the first page of this workbook, answer the questions below

JOURNAL PROMPT:

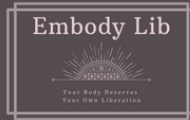
What do you notice about those social identities you named and where they are placed on the Wheel of Power/Privilege? Were you surprised by anything?

JOURNAL PROMPT:

How might your social identities and your proximity to dominant power systems influence what you believe to be true about health and wellbeing?



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Part III: Making the Connection

JOURNAL PROMPT:

How does the intersection of your social identities shape what you believe about what it takes to be "healthy" and pursue "wellbeing"?

JOURNAL PROMPT:

How does the wheel of power privilege and the intersectionality graphic mirror the current narrative around health and wellbeing?

