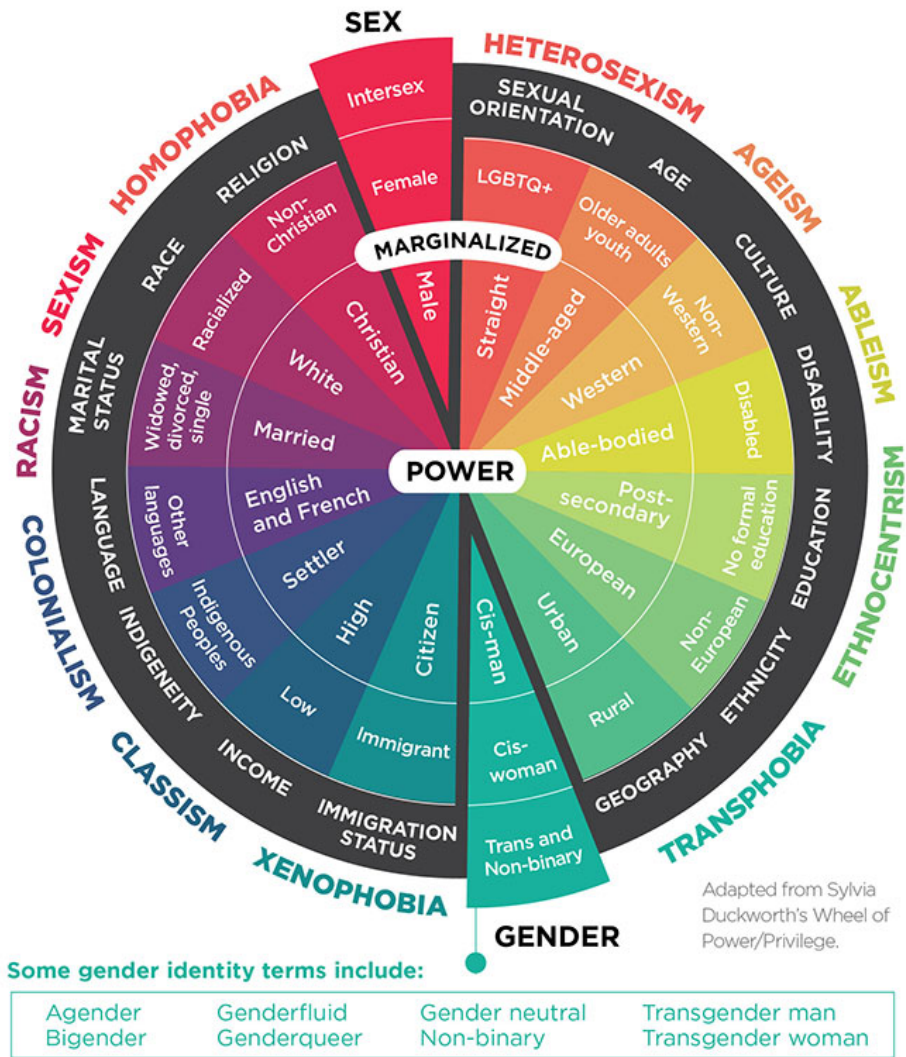


# Power Mapping

[Shortcut to Frequently Asked Questions about this activity](#)

Your responses to this worksheet are private. We will invite you to share a response to question #8 in the Equity Academy classroom session, but that's it.

1. Please review the wheel below, which “maps” which identities tend to give us access to more power/privilege, and which identities tend to be marginalized. Think about your identity and where you land on the “map” in each category below.



2. Which aspects of your identity give you access to more power/privilege? Less?

3. Are there places where your identities overlap in ways that make things especially dangerous? To use Kimberlé Crenshaw's language around intersectionality - does your identity sit at any particularly dangerous intersections? Places that tend to not be "on the map" of others' awareness?
  
4. Which aspects of your identity do you think about more often? Less often?
  
5. Do you notice any patterns between which aspects you think about more/less often, and which aspects of your identity give you access to more/less power? We often think about the the aspects of our identity that give us *less* power *more* often, and think about the aspects of our identity that give us *more* power *less* often; that may or may not be true for you.
  
6. Pick a couple of aspects of your identity to focus on for this question - preferably one that gives you access to more power/privilege, and one that gives you access to less power/privilege. What messages have you received about these different aspects of your identity?

7. If the communities you serve in your job filled out this worksheet, do you think their responses would be mostly the same as yours? Mostly different? Or are they so diverse that it would be hard to pick out a pattern?
8. How might your identity and where you land on the “power map” affect your awareness of biases and/or microaggressions? (We will invite you to share your response to this question in the next Equity Academy classroom session.)
9. What was filling this out like? Which parts felt easy? Hard? What is that about? How might that affect your work?

# Power Mapping: Frequently Asked Questions

## **What if I don't know what some of these terms mean?**

That's ok! We're here to learn! You could try looking them up now, or just set that as an equity learning goal for a later time.

## **What if my identity in one or more of these categories is ambiguous? What if I "pass" for one thing, but that's not how I see myself?**

Go ahead and include all of that in your responses to the worksheet and in your reflections. How you see yourself, and what you know to be true about yourself, affects your experience and your awareness! And perhaps unfortunately - whether we like it or not - how others perceive us impacts how they treat us, and that affects our experience and therefore our awareness as well.

## **Wait - is this saying that people in the "marginalized" groups have NO power? And that people in the "powerful" groups always have all the power?**

No. There may be situations where someone who is a part of some marginalized groups has some power over someone who is part of some powerful/privileged groups. For example - a white man may have a supervisor at work who is a Black woman. Also, as we explored in Course 1's classroom session, there are lots of kinds of power, and some of them are kinds that we all have access to (creative capacity to act, power when we organize with others to achieve something together). This graphic is mostly talking about access to systems, institutions, and resources on a large group level, and patterns of power and marginalization that have played out over many generations. Also, this graphic or "power map" is meant to refer primarily to a United States or North American context.

## **What is the point of doing this? Is this just meant to guilt and shame "privileged" people? Is this all saying that being more marginalized means marginalized people know everything, are always right, are more morally good, and people who are more powerful/privileged know nothing, are always wrong, are more morally bad?**

Nope! You didn't choose where you landed on this "map" just like you didn't choose your order in "The Bag Game" in Classroom Session 1. So there's nothing automatically morally good or bad about that; it was out of your control. And while experiencing marginalization might give us some special insight into how a certain system of power works, that still doesn't mean we know everything about it or are always right about how it works, or can speak accurately to represent the entirety of that marginalized group. The point of doing this is just to reflect a bit about our own access to power and privilege, and how that may (or may not) have impacted our awareness of different issues, particularly as that relates to our work and our interactions with others at work.

## **Why focus so much on how we are different from each other?**

We can't notice differences - disparities, inequities - in outcomes if we don't notice how we are different from one another, which then means we can't solve the problems causing those disparities and inequities. Also, seeing our differences helps us see each other more fully.