

Adapting and Applying the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competency Framework for Transition Professionals

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Training Objectives

At the end of this session, participants will have:

- An increased understanding of the characteristics that comprise their individual social identity
- An increased understanding of how power and privilege are related to different aspects of social identity
- An increased understanding of how power and privilege show up in working relationships with students and young people
- Will be familiar with the basic competencies involved in using a multicultural and social justice approach based on the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competency Framework (Ratts, Et. Al., 2015) as Adapted for Transition Professionals

Training Agenda

- Setting the Stage
 - Intentionality Training Space
 - Social Identity Theory
 - The Human Brain, Unconscious Bias, and Mental Models
 - Influence of Oppression
 - Socio-ecological Perspective
 - Exercise: What are my Social Identities
 - Social Identity and Power and Privilege
- Application: Social Identity, Power, Privilege and a Co-Constructed Approach for Working with Students and Youth
 - The Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competency Framework (Ratts, Et. Al., 2015) as Adapted for Transition Professionals

Setting the Stage



Bringing Intention to the Space

- Grace
- Kindness
- Assume Positive Intent
- Willingness to Engage
- Getting Comfortable with Being Uncomfortable



Early Social Identity Theory

- According to Henri Tajfel, the founder of Social Identity Theory, Social Identity is a person's sense or understanding of who they are based on group membership.
- Tajfel asserted that the groups people belong to give persons a sense of pride and self-esteem.
- Group membership is our connection to the social world and thus give us a social identity.
- Social Identities not only describe who people are, they can also prescribe people's behavior based on those social expectations associated with the group.

Early Social Identity Theory (cont.)

- Tajfel also asserted that humans as part of their typical cognitive process categorize things and in doing so tend to over exaggerate the differences between groups and the similarities within groups. These groups are then referred to as the “in group” and the “out group”.
- Social Identity Theory posits that the “in group” will seek out negative attributes of the “out group” as a means to enhance their own self image.
- This idea of the human cognitive tendency to categorize or group things coupled with Social Identity Theory’s assertion that humans are prone to over exaggerate differences and similarities helps explain how identity is socially constructed and how implicit bias occurs.

Common Examples of Embodied Social Identity(ies)

Macro Level

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Ability/Disability
- Class/SocioEconomic Status
- Education
- Religion/Faith

Micro/Meso Level

- Family Member
- Profession (i.e. Lawyer/Doctor/VR Counselor/Teacher/Student)
- Community Member (i.e City Council/School Board Member)
- Identity By Interest (i.e. Baker/Reader/Gardener/DnD)
- Identity by Cause (i.e. Climate Change, Social Justice, Cancer Survivor)

From Social Identity Theory to the Human Brain, Unconscious Bias, and Mental Models

The Human Brain

- Information Processing
 - Consciously aware of only a very small portion
- Subconscious Mind
 - Categorization
 - Creates Associations
 - Fills in the gaps
- Mental Models
 - Frames that help us understand and navigate the world

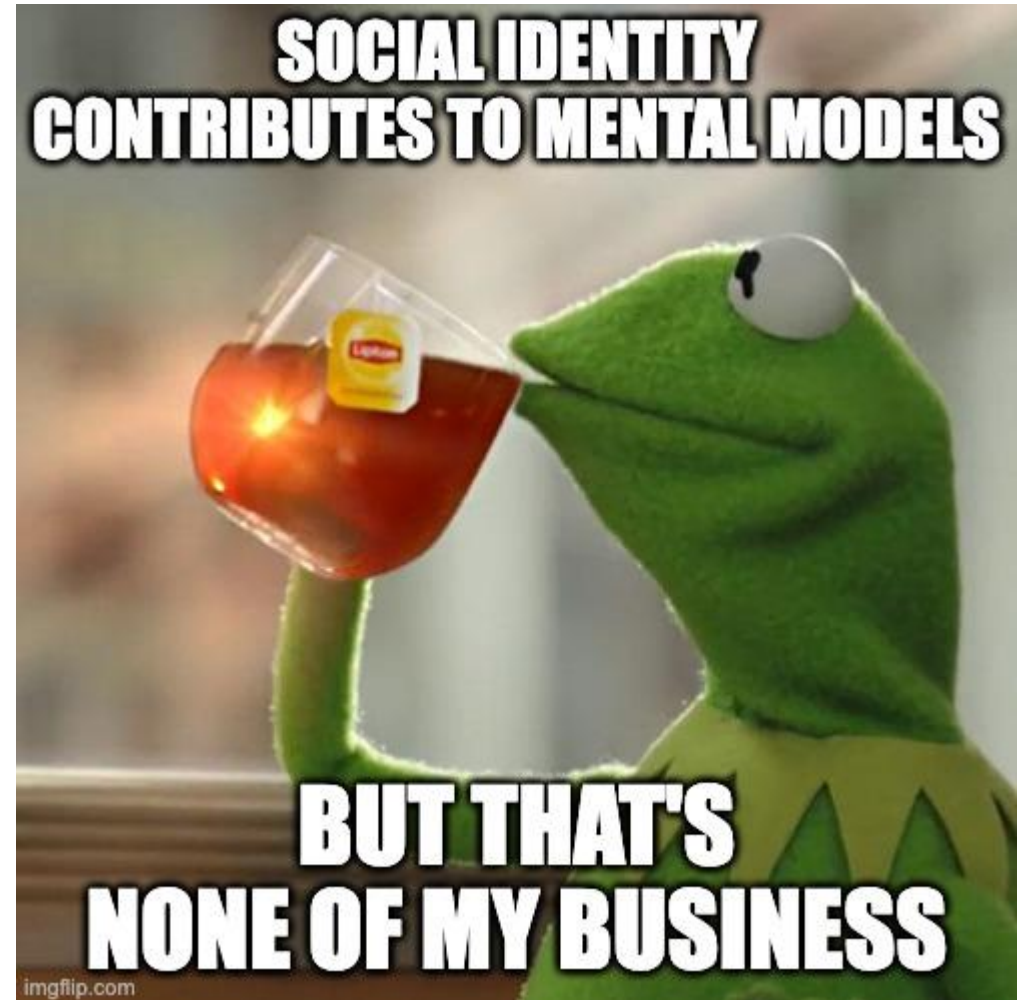
Unconscious Bias

- Unconscious bias is the result of our limited cognitive capacity.
- Unconscious biases are our unintentional preferences, formed by our socialization and experiences, including exposure to the media.
- There have been an overwhelming number of studies that have shown the significant impact unconscious biases can have on human capital processes.
- Unconscious biases are unavoidable. We all have them.

From Social Identity Theory to the Human Brain, Unconscious Bias, and Mental Models (cont.)

Mental Models

- Shapes what we think and how we understand
- Shapes the connections and opportunities we see
- Shapes the way we simplify complexity
- Shapes our reasoning and how we assign relevance



The Evolution of Social Identity

- The social construction of identity is far more nuanced and dynamic than originally understood and conceptualized (Ratts, Et. Al. 2015).
- Early research and literature understood identity as single variables as opposed to the linked parts which consequently ignores the interconnected system of identities that comprise human identity (Ratts, Et. Al. 2015).
- Mainstream discourse on intersectionality asserts that human identity is comprised of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, religion and disability and that all of these are socially constructed and intersect fluidly a different points in time contributing to one's dynamic positionality as in society (Ratts, Et. Al. 2015).
- What's more this shapes people's understanding and experience of privilege and oppression with their environment influencing which identity is most salient at a given moment in time (Ratts, Et. Al. 2015).
- Recognizing the existence of multiple identities is paramount to understanding the complexities for persons from systematically and historically marginalized and excluded groups.

Influence of Oppression

- According to Adams, Bell, and Griffin (2007) oppression exists in several forms (i.e., racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ageism, religious oppression) and is exposed at the individual and systemic levels creating inequities for marginalized individuals
 - Individual - Microaggression (i.e., being misgendered)
 - Systems - Policy, Rules, Laws, and Institutions (i.e., sub-minimum wage)
- Regardless of whether intentional or unintentional, oppression has destructive ramifications on the mental health and well-being of systematically and historically marginalized and excluded individuals, populations, and communities.
 - Minority Stress
 - Transgender Suicide Rates
 - Poverty
- Oppression has biopsychosocial impact

Socio-Ecological Perspective

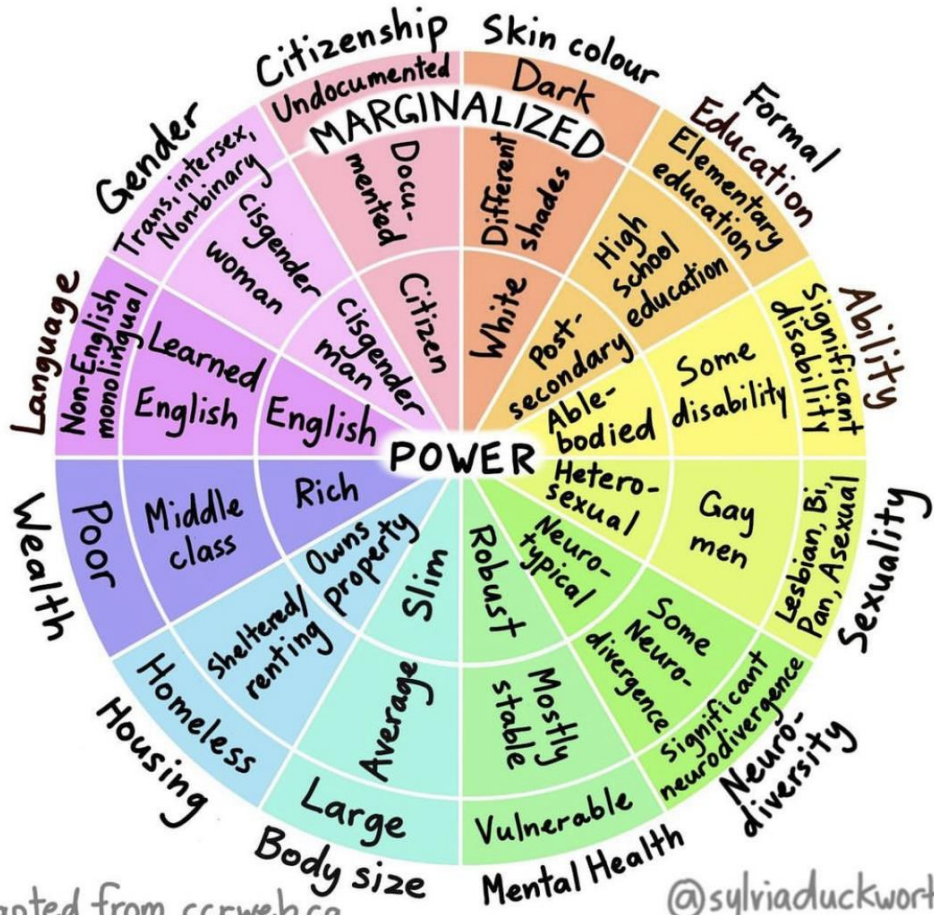
- Exploring social environments is crucial to understanding the impact of intersectionality and oppression on an individual's well-being and mental health (Ratts, Et. Al., 2015).
- A socioecological perspective accounts for the idea that individuals both shape and are shaped by their environment and provides a framework to understand to what degree oppressive environmental influences impact the mental health and well-being of individuals.
- 5 Levels of Influence Contributing to Health Behaviors (McLeroy et. al., 1988)
 - Intrapersonal (individual attitudes, knowledge, behaviors and skills)
 - Interpersonal (social network and support systems)
 - Institutional (schools, churches, businesses and community organizations)
 - Community (norms and values of the community)
 - Public Policy (local, state, and federal policies and laws)
- Together Client and Counselor can determine whether strategies and interventions should target one or any combination of the above factors.



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WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



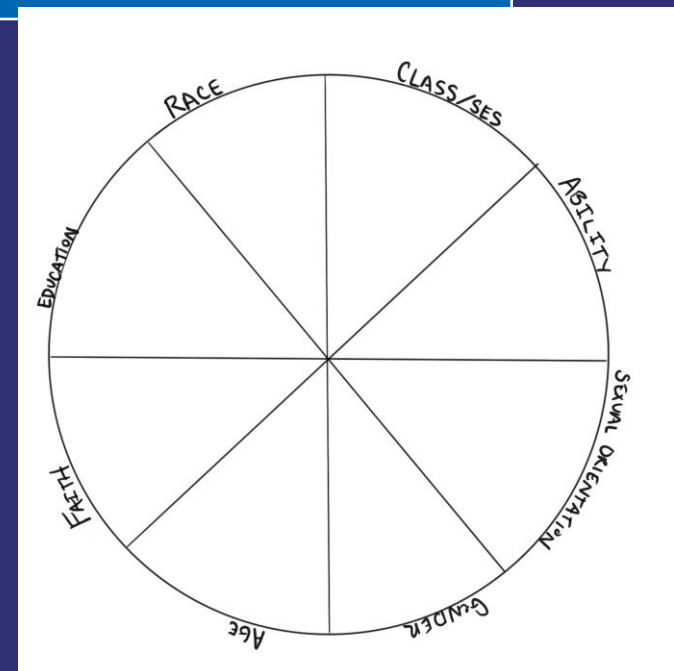
Adapted from ccrweb.ca

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Privilege and Proximity to Power

Degree of Power	Race	Class/SES	Ability	Sexual Orientation	Gender	Age	Faith	Education	Degree of Marginalization
Most	Caucasian white	Rich	No Disability	Straight	Cisgender Man	Middle-Age Adult	Christian	Post-Secondary	Least
Less		Middle Working	Some Disability	Gay Men	Cisgender Woman	Elderly, Young Adult	Other Faiths	High School	More
Least	BIPOC	Working Poor	Significant Disability	Lesbian, Bi, Pansexual, Asexual, Queer	Transgender, Intersex, Non-Binary	Adolescent, Child	Agnostic, Atheist	Less than High school	Most

Adapted From: Sylvia Duckworth's Instagram and <https://ccweb.ca/en/anti-oppression>



Example Macro Level Identity Wheel

Race: White

Class/SocioEconomic

Status: Middle Working Class

Ability: Some Disability

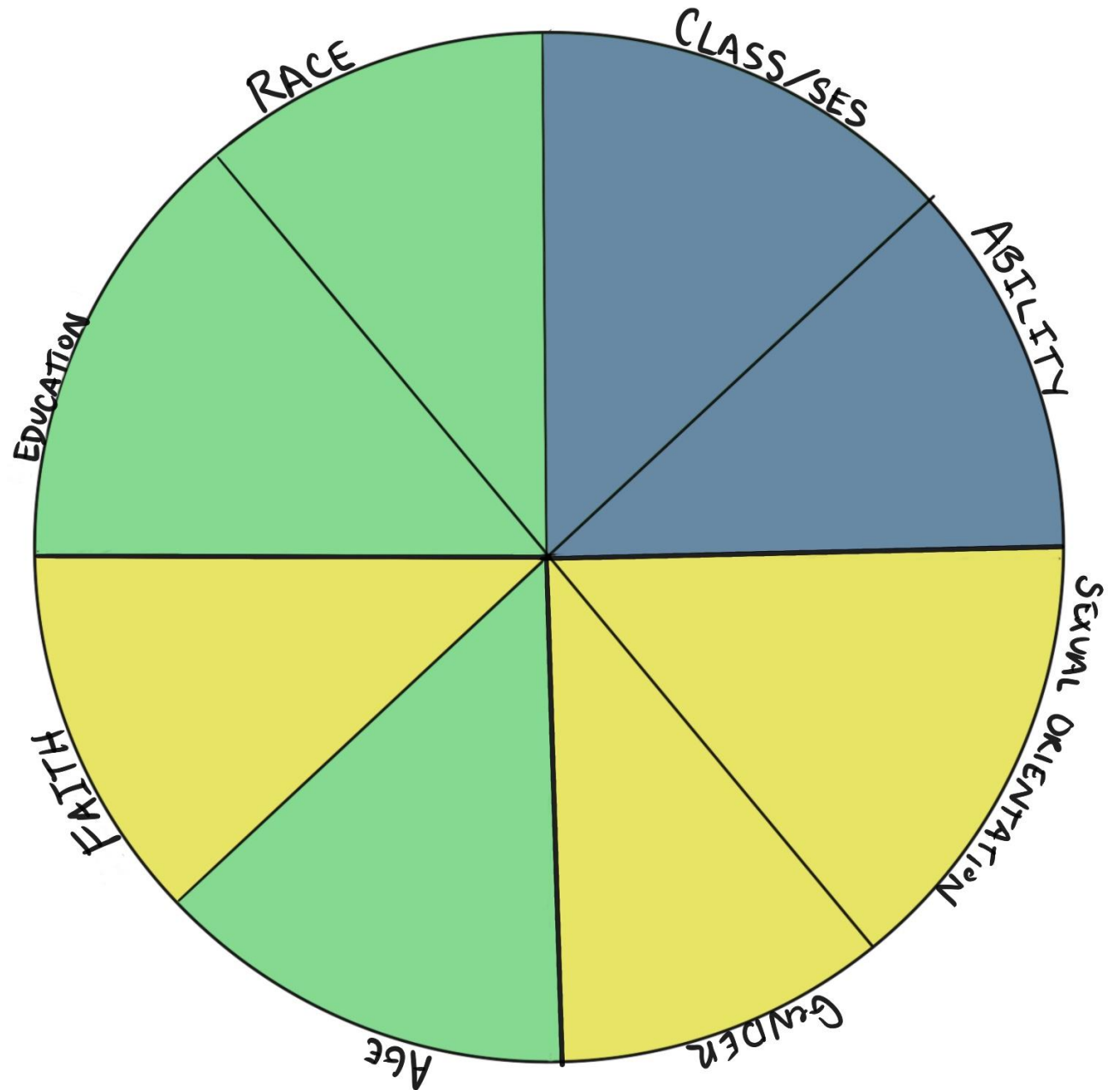
Sexual Orientation: Queer

Gender: Non-Binary

Age: Middle-Age Adult

Faith/Religion: Atheist

Education: Master's Degree



The Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competency (MSJCC) Framework (Ratts, Et. Al., 2015)

Adapted for Transition Professionals



MSJCC For Transition Professionals

Counselor = Transition Professional

Client = Student/Youth & Family

Counseling Relationship = Transition Related Relationship

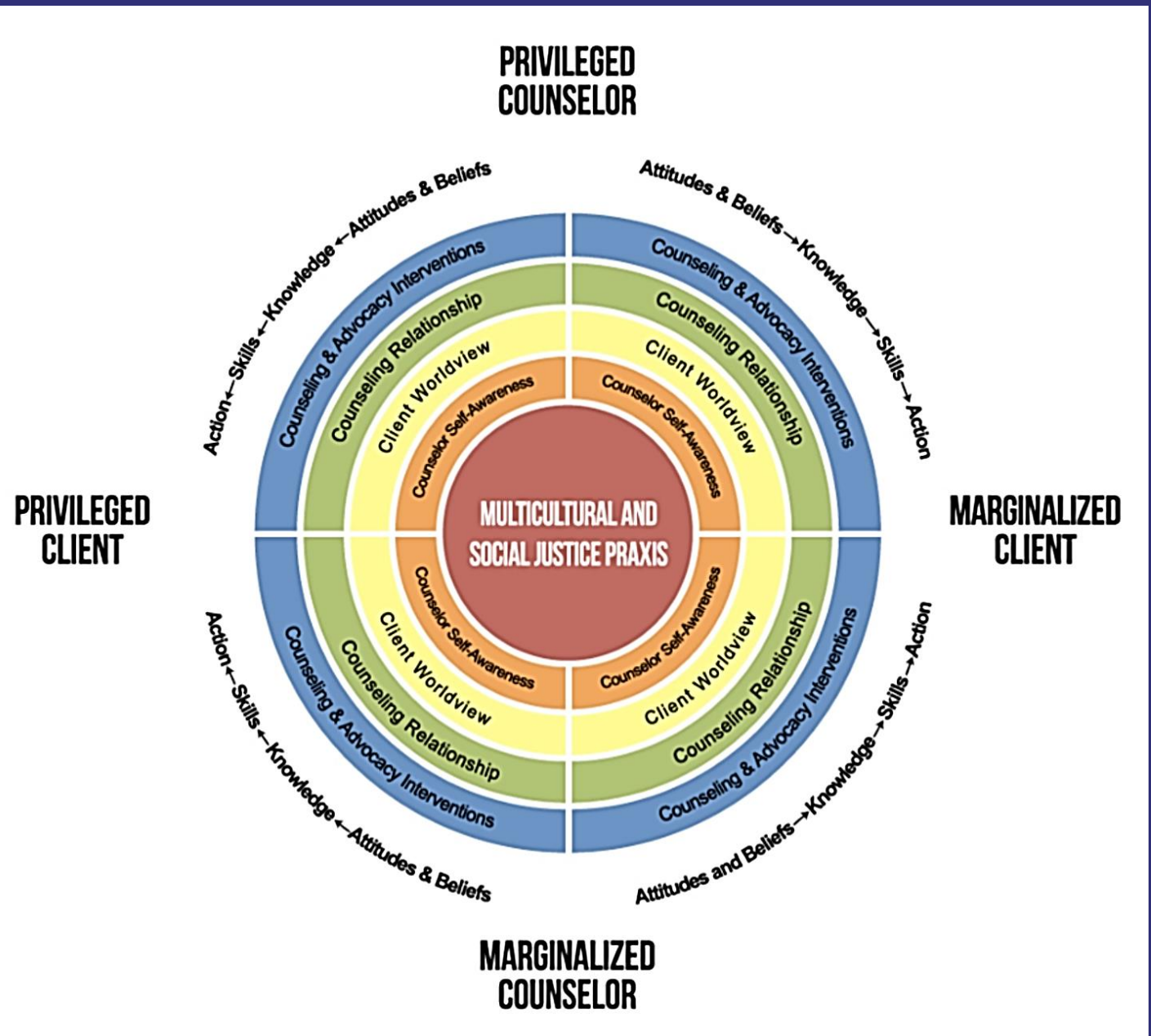
Counseling & Advocacy Interventions = Transition Advocacy, Plans & Activities

Privileged Counselor = Privileged Transition Professional

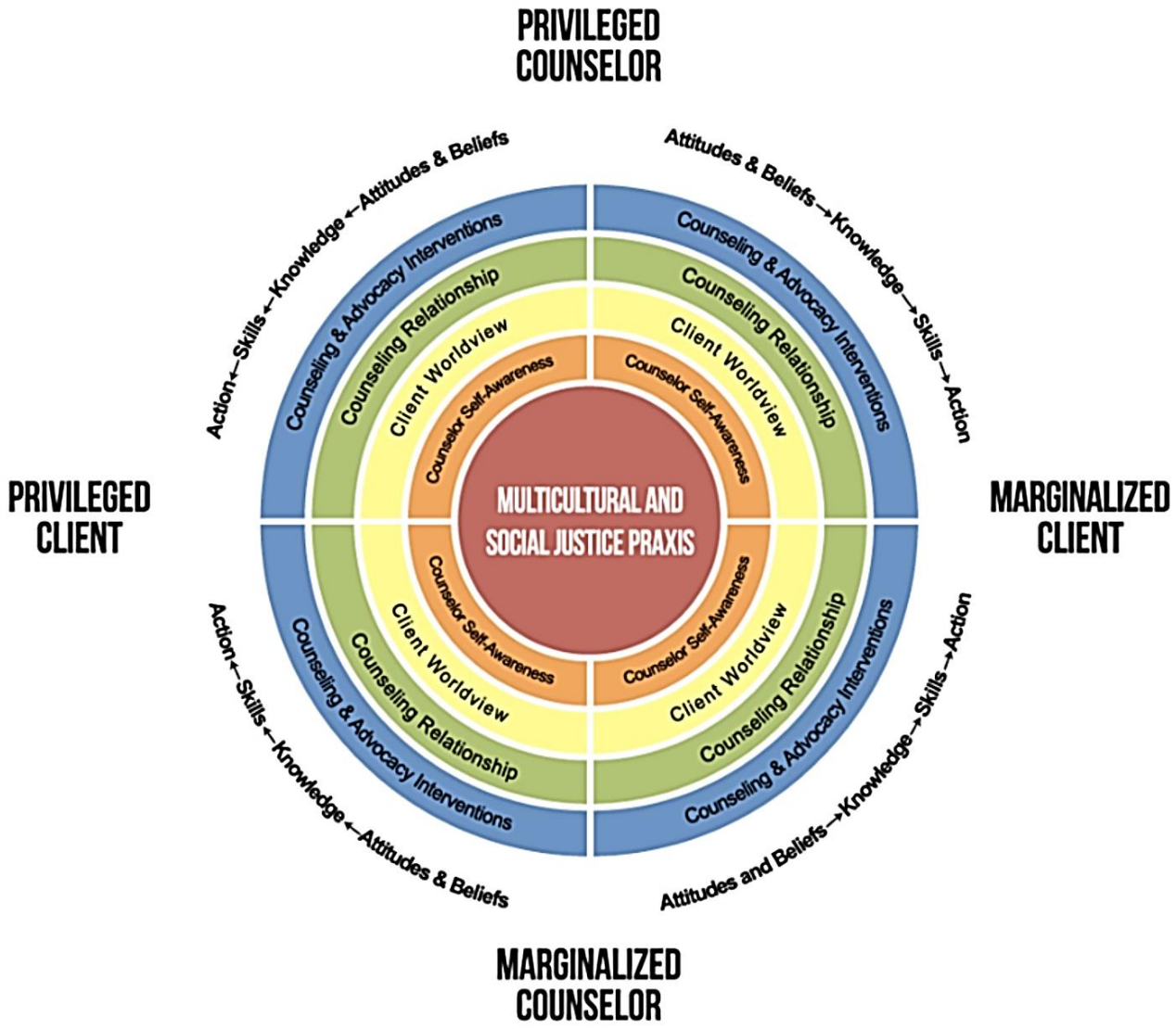
Privileged Client = Privileged Student/Youth & Family

Marginalized Client = Marginalized Student/Youth & Family

Marginalized Counselor = Marginalized Transition Professional



Organization - Power & Privilege



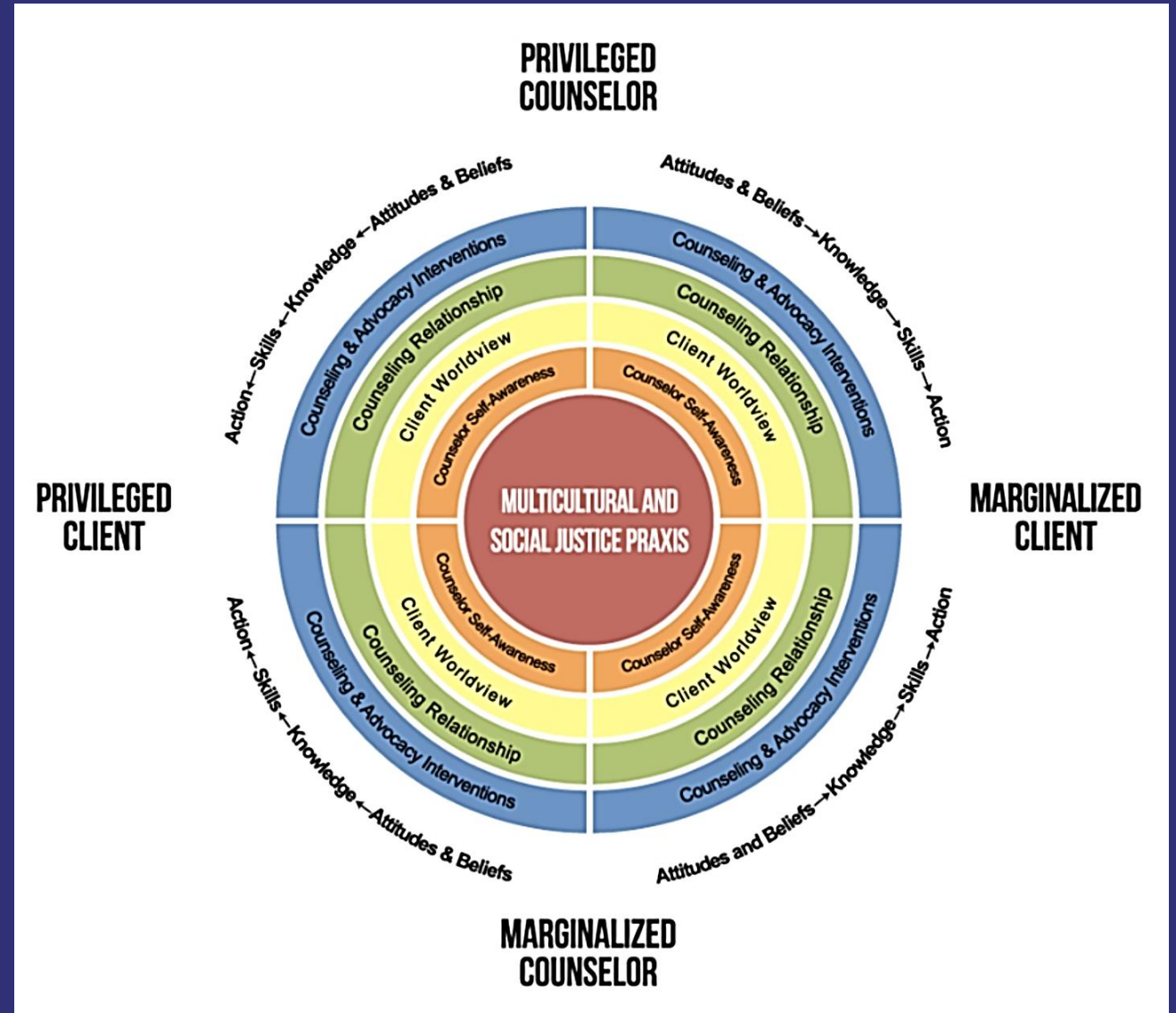
- Quadrants
- Developmental Domains (concentric circles)
- Multicultural and Social Justice competence begins with:
 - Self-awareness and extends to
 - Student/Youth/Family worldview, which extends to
 - the transition relationship, which extends to
 - The transition and advocacy plans and activity

QUADRANTS: PRIVILEGED AND MARGINALIZED STATUSES BETWEEN TRANSITION PROFESSIONAL & Student/Youth and Family

- Power, privilege and oppression are all part of the transition professional relationship to varying degrees based on transition professionals' and students'/youth privileged and marginalized statuses
 - Privileged Transition Professional-Marginalized Student/Youth
 - Privileged Transition Professional-Privileged Student/Youth
 - Marginalized Transition Professional-Privileged Student/Youth
 - Marginalized Transition Professional-Marginalized Student/Youth
- Quadrants capture a moment in time because of fluidity of identity because salience of identity is contextual
- Likely that transition professionals and students/youth will identify simultaneously with being in more than one quadrant because of their position in both marginalized and privileged groups.

Developmental Domains

- Each Quadrant has domains that are paramount to a multicultural and social justice practice.
 - Transition Professional Self-Awareness
 - Student/Youth and Family Worldview
 - The Transition Relationship
 - Transition and Advocacy Plans and Activity



COMPETENCIES: ATTITUDES & BELIEFS, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ACTION

- Organized into four categories and developmental competencies all of which are embedded within the first three domains of the model
 - Certain attitudes and beliefs are required in order to commit to practicing as a Transition Professional from a multicultural and social justice lens
 - Having knowledge of multicultural and social justice theory and constructs is essential
 - Multicultural and social justice infused attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge are necessary to develop skill-based interventions
- Taking action to operationalize is critical to practice multicultural and social justice-based transition practice

Competencies: Transition Professional Self-Awareness

Attitudes and Beliefs

- Awareness of one's attitudes, values and beliefs
- Recognition that developing self-awareness is a lifelong process
- Self-Awareness includes professional development, self-reflection, critical analysis, reading & immersion
- Awareness of different statuses self holds; awareness of privilege or lack of and how it influences worldview and life experiences

Knowledge

- Of how assumptions, values, beliefs, and bias contribute to worldview
- Understand how privilege and oppression influence experiences
- Relevant resources to help ongoing awareness of values, beliefs, biases and positionality
- How communication style is influenced by marginalized and privileged statuses

Competencies: Transition Professional Self-Awareness

Skills

- Reflective and critical thinking skills
- Ability to explain how social identities and marginalized and privileged statuses influence worldview and lived experience
- Analytical skills to compare one's own marginalized and privileged statuses and experiences to others'
- Ability to evaluate how one's own positionality influences personal and professional experiences

Action

- Proactive in learning about one's own assumptions, values, beliefs, biases, and social identities.
- Seeks out professional development opportunities
- Immerse oneself in their communities to learn how power, privilege, and oppression influence one's own experiences
- Take initiative to learn more about one's own communication style and how it is influenced by one's own marginalized and privileged statuses.

COMPETENCIES: STUDENT/YOUTH WORLDVIEW

Attitudes and Beliefs

- Curiosity for learning about worldviews and lived experience of students/youth
- Awareness of how students'/youth social identity development influences their worldviews and lived experience
- Comfortable with being uncomfortable
- Learning about students'/youth worldview and lived experience is a lifelong process
- Awareness of students'/youth attitudes and biases about marginalized and privileged groups
- There are as many within-group differences as between-group differences

Knowledge

- Relevant theories, concepts, research, and data
- Dynamics of stereotypes, discrimination, power, privilege and oppression
- Understand that one's own culture influences one's communication styles.

COMPETENCIES: STUDENT/YOUTH WORLDVIEW

Skills

- Reflective and Critical Thinking Skills
- Comprehension skills in order to explain how marginalized and privileged identities and statuses influence worldview and lived experiences
- Ability to apply knowledge of students'/youth experiences in the transition relationship
- Analytical skills to determine how lived experiences can help inform transition plans.
- Understand how stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, power, privilege, and oppression influence students'/youth worldviews

Action

- Seek out opportunities to learn about students'/youth worldviews and lived experiences
- Engage in professional development to achieve above objective but understand that didactic types of professional development (such as this one) may not be as effective as immersing oneself in the community

COMPETENCIES: THE TRANSITION RELATIONSHIP

Attitudes and Beliefs

- Understand how cultural values, beliefs, and biases as well as marginalized and privileged statuses influence the relationship.
- How social identity development shapes the relationship
- Recognize how their strengths and limitations differ based on students'/youth status
- Awareness of when marginalized and privileged statuses are present in the relationship.
- Recognize how dynamics of power, privilege, and oppression influence the transition relationship based on status of both transition professional and students'/youth status

Knowledge

- Theories and concepts that explain how status influence the relationship based on each party's status.
- How issues of power, privilege, oppression, and social identity development strengthen or hinder the transition relationship and how attitudes, beliefs, and prejudices have a differential based on students'/youth and transition professionals' statuses

COMPETENCIES: THE TRANSITION RELATIONSHIP

Skills

- Comfortable discussing with students'/youth how stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, power, privilege, and oppression influence the transition relationship
- Cross-cultural communication skills
- Apply knowledge of worldviews and lived experiences to the relationship
- Analytical skills to interpret how students'/youth worldview and lived experience shape the relationship
- Understand how stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, power, privilege and oppression influence the worldviews and experiences of students'/youth.

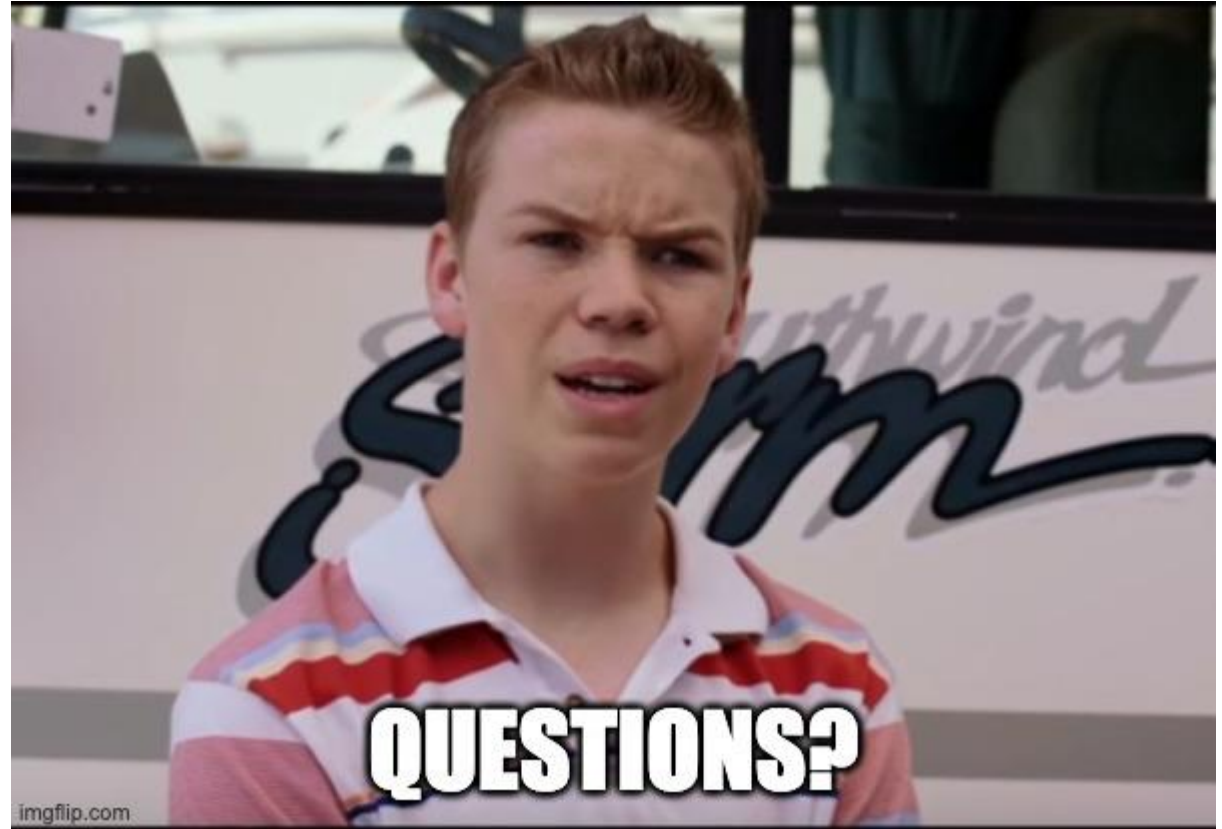
Action

- Participate in professional development opportunities to understand how to create a, welcoming, and affirming relationship and environment for all students'/youth that helps them to feel safe in their work with you.
- Address issues in the community. Partner and collaborate with community.

COMPETENCIES: Transition and Advocacy Plans and Activity

- When Transition Professionals are attuned to one's own beliefs and values and sensitive to their students'/youth worldviews and lived experiences, and understand the different ways that power, privilege, oppression, and social status shapes the transition relationship they gain insight into what multicultural and social justice approaches are appropriate and necessary.
- Engage in transition plans and activities that are culturally relevant and address both individual and community level change because when culturally responsive activity is integrated with social justice transition professionals are better equipped to address students'/youth needs.

Open Discussion



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