

Privilege walk¹
Suggested Total Time: 45 minutes

Purpose: To provide participants with an opportunity to understand the intricacies of privilege.

Privilege Walk (15-20 min):

- Participants should stand shoulder to shoulder in a line across the room.
- At the site, participants, can release their hands, but should be instructed to stand shoulder to shoulder in a straight line without speaking.
- Participants should be instructed to listen carefully to each sentence, and take the step required if the sentence applies to them.

Sentences (you can add/remove sentences):

- a) If your primary ethnic identity is Canadian, take one step forward.
- b) If you were ever called names because of your race, class, gender, or sexual orientation, take one step back.
- c) If you were ever ashamed of your clothes, house, car, etc. take one step back.
- d) If your parents were professionals (i.e. doctors, lawyers, etc.), take one step forward.
- e) If you ever tried to change your appearance, mannerisms, or behavior to avoid being judged or ridiculed, take one step back.
- f) If you studied the culture of your ancestors in elementary school, take one step forward.
- g) If you ever had to skip a meal or were hungry because there was not enough money to buy food when you were growing up, take one step forward.
- h) If one of your parents was unemployed or laid off, not by choice, take one step forward.
- i) If you were ever denied access to academics or jobs because of your race, class, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation take one step back.
- j) If you were raised in a single parent household, take one step back.
- k) If you were ever accused of cheating or lying because of your race, class, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, take one step back.
- l) If you had to rely primarily on public transportation when you were growing up, take one step back.
- m) If you were ever stopped and questioned by the police because of your race, class, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, take one step back.
- n) If you were ever afraid of violence because of your race, class, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, take one step back.
- o) If you were ever uncomfortable about a joke related to your race, class, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, take one step back.
- p) If you were ever the victim of violence related to your race, class, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, take one step back.
- q) If your parents told you could be anything you wanted to be when you grew up, take one step forward.

¹ This exercise was adapted from Peggy McIntosh's article *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*

Instruct the participants to take a look around and take a seat where they are standing.

Debrief (20 min) Use the following questions to engage discussion:

- What was the purpose of this activity?
- How did this make you feel?
- Those of you in front, how did you feel? What about those of you in back?
- How can you relate this activity to the idea of stereotypes?
- Were there questions you were hoping would not be asked? Any you wish had been asked?
- How might such issues/factors affect members of your organization?
- How might they affect your relationship with your members?
- Did you learn things about yourself or were you forced to think about things you've never thought about before?
- What role does privilege play in this?
- What role does pride and shame play?

White Privilege Activity²
Suggested time: 30min

Distribute a copy of these questions and allow the group some time to answer 'yes' to the questions that relate to them.

Questions:

1. If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area I can afford and in which I would want to live.
2. I can be pretty sure that my new neighbors will be neutral or pleasant to me.
3. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
4. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely and positively represented.
5. I can go into most supermarkets and find the staple foods which fit with my racial/ethnic traditions.
6. I can go into any hairdresser's shop and find someone who can cut my hair.
7. I can swear, or dress in secondhand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race.
8. I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might mistreat them because of my race.
9. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
10. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
11. I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to "the person in charge," I will be facing a person of my race.

² Adapted from the essay: *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* by Peggy McIntosh

12. I can conveniently buy posters, postcards, picture books, greeting cards, and children's magazines featuring people of my race.

13. I can choose blemish cover or bandages in "flesh" color and have them more or less match my skin.

14. I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of race.

Total number of "yes" answers:

Once all have answered the questions go around and ask the participants how many yes's they had. Which questions they replied yes to should be kept confidential.

Have the group discuss their thoughts/emotions around their total numbers and how that relates to working with marginalized communities and facing issues of health equity.

Break out of the box!³
Suggested time: 10min

A small paper with the following can be copied and distributed to *begin the discussion on health equity or the entire presentation (whatever you think fits best)*. You can also copy/paste this into your PowerPoint presentation to make it more visual.

Once everyone has drawn their lines, ask how many created a box.

Note: most participants will draw lines on the outer portion of the dots, creating a box.

Without picking up your pen, connect the dots using the simplest method, drawing ONLY 4 lines.

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* * *
* * *

Debrief: It is a natural tendency to put lines on the outer portions of the dots creating a box—it's the simplest way. This 'box' is how many choose to live their lives, forming a skewed version of reality.

Just as you could not solve this puzzle without drawing lines outside of the box, we cannot approach the problem of inequities in health within the current "box" we live in.

Our current societal 'box' states that (1) inequities are inevitable, and (2) since they are inevitable, we shouldn't be angered or bothered by their existence.

How do we as health promoters, step out of this box and ensure equity for all?

³ Adapted from a presentation by Anthony Fleg from the University of North Carolina: *An introduction to health inequities*.

Web based interactive activities/resources

Links and descriptions can be placed separately under headings on the website.

Determinants of Health

The World Health Organization recognizes that “by far the greatest share of health problems (are) attributable to broad social conditions.” Similarly, in its population health approach, Health Canada has identified twelve key determinants of health.

This game tests to see if you can match the determinant of health with a piece of evidence that supports it.

<http://www.genderandhealth.ca/en/modules/poverty/poverty-intro-12-determinants-01.jsp?r=>

Health Equity

Seven learn-by-doing experiences to help you discover the underlying causes of health inequities.

Please note that some of the content is US specific but the underlying message is universal.

<http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/interactivities.php>

Diversity & Anti-oppression

The Training for Change website provides some excellent interactive activities to support diversity and anti-oppression training.

<http://trainingforchange.org/tools/Diversity%20%2526%20Anti-Oppression>

Document: *“Avoiding Common Communication Errors When Interacting With Individuals Who Are Different Than You”* provides tools on effective communication with diverse populations.

www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/.../library/avoiding_comm_errors.pdf

Inclusivity

The “Count me in!” workbook provides some great tools for discussing inclusivity.

www.count-me-in.ca/docs/cmi_wrkbk_eng_apr05.pdf