

TO EQUALIZE POWER AMONG US



Tools for Change

We can make active choices to create the space for transformation. For those of us who bring the pattern of privilege, here are some guidelines to help us equalize relations. Privilege is invisible to those who have it. To create a context which embraces diversity and inclusion, in which no one is marginalized, a conscious and ongoing effort is required. With a desire to examine our sensitivity to respecting boundaries in the presence of power imbalances.

Consider the Following Questions: Yes or No (Y/N)

Do I tend to always speak first, interrupt or take more than my share of space? _____

Do I assume I'm more capable? _____

Do I trivialize the experiences of others? _____

Do I assume an individual speaks for others from their group? _____

Do I reduce difficulties to personality conflicts, ignoring history or power factors? _____

Do I ignore or minimize differences by emphasizing similarities? _____

Do I expect others to be grateful? _____

Do I equate all oppressions as equal? _____

Do I defend my mistakes by focusing on good intentions? _____

Do I take things personally and miss the systemic aspects? _____

Do I assume everyone as the same options I do? _____

Do I expect "others" to educate me about their group's history, or sensibilities? _____

Do I assume someone is exceptional compared to the "average" person of their group? _____

Do I always expect to be trusted? _____

Am I willing to do the following?

- Remember that others speak about more than the conditions of their own group.
- Take responsibility to learn about the history, culture, and struggles of other groups as told by them.
- Address accessibility, include such things as money, space, transportation, child-care and language.
- Regard people as whole human beings with families, interests, and ideas.
- Name dominating behavior when I see it.
- Ask questions and respect disagreements.
- Make *all* information accessible to “others” so they can decide if they are interested.
- Appreciate efforts that point out my mistakes or lack of awareness.
- Appreciate the risk a person takes in sharing their experience with me.
- Take risks, trust others.

Adapted from: Breaking Old Patterns Weaving New Ties: Alliance Building by Margo Adair & Sharon Howell with input from Bill Aal and Susan Partnow

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