Intersectionality
Establish class values

- We will be talking about sexuality, gender, pleasure, abuse and safety in these sessions. What will make this class a safe space for everyone to share, express their views and discuss freely?
- How do we want others to behave?
- How will we behave?
Looking at intersectionality

Participants make groups of 4 persons

A. Each group discusses the various identities that members of the group have. Which of these identities are important in the context of gender roles and sexuality?

B. Each group imagines that they have gone to another country to represent their institution in a cross cultural exchange program. What identities would the group now consider very important?

A. 40 minutes: Each group presents what they have noted

Session is held after this is completed
What is Intersectionality

• An analytical framework to understand how different aspects of one’s identity intersect and overlap and impact experiences of discrimination and inequality

• Plays an important role in understanding how power and oppression operate and marginalize

Examples:

• Dark skinned (disadvantage) woman (disadvantage)
• Rich (advantage) woman (disadvantage)
• Educated (advantage) trans-man (disadvantage)
• Man (advantage) Lawyer (advantage) Gay (disadvantage)
Overlapping Identities

- Education
- Family Status
- Religion
- Race
- Age
- Language
- Occupation
- Geographic Location
- Sexuality
- Heritage/History
- Ability
- Ethnicity
- Immigration Status
- Aboriginality
Some social identities that impact discrimination

- Class
- Caste
- Tribal identity
- Disability
- Religion
- Citizenship
People of different gender and sexual identities face different forms of discrimination.

But there are other overlapping social identities that play a role in how a people of same gender might face different discriminations.

Example: poor woman might be discriminated differently compared to a rich woman.
Why do we need to talk about it

• Helps us identify the challenges different individuals face and how it forms their personality and worldview

• Helps us use our core counselling (Unconditional positive regard, empathy and genuineness) and problem-solving skills more effectively
Broaching intersectionality
Implicit Bias

• Everyone holds certain implicit and unconscious biases that impacts their perceptions and judgements of others
• People who intend to be fair might display biases unconditionally
• Biases are destructive and can hamper our judgement and impact our counselling skills
Marginalization

Have you ever felt marginalized?
Reflection Questions

• How does intersectionality help me understand the impact of the work I do with my clients/ people I serve/ people I work with?

• How does intersectionality help me understand the person in their entirety rather than just their presenting problem?

• Can I look at the organization that I am a part of from an intersectional lens? How will it change my perspective?
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CREATING SAFE SPACES

Thank You!

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Intersectionality in the counselling profession
Case Study for counsellors

David is a 30-year-old African-American man who is unemployed. His wife who is an Indian woman, however, is employed and comes from a wealthy family. David has reported struggling with his anger and hitting his wife in frustration as he sometimes feels like he is not ‘man enough’ but feels guilty later. He wants to get his emotions under control and wants a loving relationship with his wife.
Competent strategies for counselors

• Group and individual activities to address intersectionality
• Treatment planning and discussion with supervisor
• Advocacy and self-reflection