

# Power, Privilege and Entitlement: Cross Currents of gender, race and money

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## Power, Privilege and Entitlement: Cross-currents of gender, race and money

▶ **Goals:**

- ▶ Increase awareness of moments of power, privilege & entitlement
- ▶ Ensure everyone feels "welcome and normal"
- ▶ Improve choices in moments exposing power, privilege or entitlement
- ▶ Practice ways to address moments of power, privilege or entitlement

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## Power, Privilege and Entitlement: Cross-currents of gender, race and money

▶ **Ask Yourself:**

- ▶ What is standing in the way of navigating these moments with respect and grace?

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**Power,  
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- ▶ **Overview of today:**
- ▶ Background: Theory and research regarding power, privilege and entitlement
- ▶ Put micro-aggressions under the microscope
- ▶ Navigating moments of power, privilege or entitlement with increased skill and grace

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**Power,  
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- ▶ **Privilege:**
- ▶ What do we mean by "privilege" when we say about someone else:
- ▶ "They seem really privileged."

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- ▶ **Privilege:**
- ▶ What do we understand by "privilege" when we hear someone say to us:
- ▶ "Your privilege is showing."

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- ▶ **Disclosure:**
- ▶ Talking about this is hard
- ▶ Navigating these moments is hard
- ▶ Navigating these moments directly, effectively and with grace is hard

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Power, Privilege and Entitlement: Cross-currents of gender, race and money

- ▶ *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*
- ▶ Peggy McIntosh (1989)

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Power, Privilege and Entitlement: Cross-currents of gender, race and money

- ▶ *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*
- ▶ I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was "meant" to remain oblivious.

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- ▶ *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*
- ▶ White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks.

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Power, Privilege and Entitlement: Cross-currents of gender, race and money

- ▶ *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*
- ▶ Identifying "white privilege makes one newly accountable."
- ▶ McIntosh identifies "some of the daily effects of white privilege in [her] life."

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- ▶ *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*
- ▶ If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford an in which I would want to live.

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- ▶ *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*
- ▶ I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.

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- ▶ *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*
- ▶ Whether I use checks, credit cards or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.

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- ▶ *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*
- ▶ I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.

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- ▶ *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*
- ▶ I will feel welcomed and "normal" in the usual walks of public life, institutional and social.

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Power, Privilege and Entitlement: Cross-currents of gender, race and money

- ▶ *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism?*
- ▶ Robin DiAngelo (2018)

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Power, Privilege and Entitlement: Cross-currents of gender, race and money

- ▶ *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism?*
- ▶ **Race is a social construct.** A Fiction. An Agreed-upon myth that has empirical grit because of its effect, not its essence.
- ▶ **Whiteness, like race, may not be true**—It's not a biologically heritable characteristic that has roots in physiological structures or in genes or chromosome. **But it is real**, in the sense that societies and rights and good and resources and privileges have been built on its foundation.
- ▶ Michael Eric Dyson (author of Tears We Cannot Stop)

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- ▶ **White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism?**
- ▶ **Whiteness is Real.**
- ▶ Compare to a baby who born is labeled either a boy or a girl.
- ▶ That child's whole trajectory is determined by which label it is given.

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- ▶ **White Fragility** is based on:
- ▶ Whiteness matters
- ▶ Whiteness gets its power when its reality is denied
- ▶ Whiteness is the invisible norm: We can see disadvantages of brown skin; but we cannot see the advantages—the privilege—of whiteness

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- ▶ **White Fragility** grows from the vision that:
- ▶ Racism is viewed as individual acts of malice...
- ▶ by essentially mean people who ...
- ▶ intentionally dislike others because of their race.

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- ▶ **White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism?**
- ▶ Racism is a system rather than just a slur

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- ▶ **White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism?**
- ▶ Racial stress is intolerable and . . .
- ▶ triggers defensive moves that . . .
- ▶ Block constructive engagement, which in turn...
- ▶ Reinstate white racial equilibrium

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**Power, Privilege and Entitlement: Cross-currents of gender, race and money**

- ▶ **Fishbowl/Role Play 1 Questions:**
- ▶ What threads of power, privilege of entitlement did you identify?
- ▶ Did you observe a micro-aggression?
- ▶ What possible threads of privilege, entitlement or bias might the client be experiencing?
- ▶ Was anyone hurt in this moment/micro-aggression?
- ▶ How might the professional respond when she realizes her client does not feel heard?
- ▶ How might the professional act so as to ensure that the client, and the client's husband, both feel "welcome" and "normal" throughout this process?

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**Power, Privilege and Entitlement: Cross-currents of gender, race and money**

- ▶ **Tools and techniques:**
- ▶ Curiosity
- ▶ Respect
- ▶ Empathy
- ▶ Self-awareness

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- ▶ **Fishbowl/Role Play 2 Questions:**
- ▶ Was this an expression of white privilege?
- ▶ Does this client feel welcome and "normal" to express her needs, desires and goals (without judgment)?
- ▶ What if you happen to live that particular part of town?
  - ▶ Do you say something?
  - ▶ If so, what do you say?
- ▶ What is standing in the way of responding in the way you wish you could?
- ▶ Do we have a duty to ignore what feels offensive out of professional responsibility?
- ▶ Do we have duty to speak up?

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- ▶ **Fishbowl/Role Play 2 Questions:**
- ▶ What tools might help in this moment?
  - ▶ Curiosity: What are you curious about?
  - ▶ Respect: For who? How to express respect?
  - ▶ Empathy: What is being expressed underneath the moment?
  - ▶ Self-Awareness: Am I affected? Triggered?

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- ▶ **Small Group Exercise Questions:**
- ▶ What do you observe about the professional's power to express her own bias?
- ▶ Do you observe any gender power/imbalance?
- ▶ What if the child specialist is male?
- ▶ Do you observe any racial/ethnic power imbalance or microaggression?
- ▶ Do you wonder whether the child specialist's bias/comments would have been the same if 1) it was the Dad having the affair? 2) the paramour was Caucasian and from middle America?
- ▶ Does anyone get hurt by this expression of bias/power imbalance when the clients are not present?
- ▶ Even when clients are not present, do they feel "welcome" and "normal" to participate with honesty and transparency in this process?

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- ▶ **Small Group Exercise Questions:**
- ▶ What might you say in this moment?
  - ▶ Curiosity: What are you curious about?
  - ▶ Respect: For who? How to express respect?
  - ▶ Empathy: What is being expressed underneath the moment?
  - ▶ Self-Awareness: Am I affected? Triggered?

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