



Youth Outside defines **cultural relevancy** as “effectively reaching and engaging communities and their youth in a manner that is consistent with the cultural context and values of that community; while effectively addressing the disparities of diversity and inclusion within an organization’s entire structure.”

**Ally:** Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and work in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggle for justice. Allies understand that it is in their own interest to end all forms of oppression, even those from which they may benefit in concrete ways. (*The Dynamic System of Power, Privilege and Oppression*)

**Cultural Appropriation:** Theft of cultural elements for one’s own use, commodification, or profit – including symbols, art, language, customs etc. – often without understanding, acknowledgment, or respect for its value in the original culture. Results from the assumption of a dominant culture’s right to take other cultural elements. (*Colors of Resistance*)

**Diversity:** Psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among any and all individuals, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, and learning styles. A diverse group, community, or organization is one in which a variety of social and cultural characteristics exist. (*The National Multicultural Institute*)

**Environmental Justice:** The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Environmental Justice acknowledges that vulnerable communities are often subjected to the disproportionate burden of pollution and contamination, and works to empower and support communities disproportionately targeted by inequitable environmental treatment.

**Equity:** The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of certain groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups. (*UC Berkeley Initiative for Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity*)

**Inclusion:** The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people. (*UC Berkeley Initiative for Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity*)

**Intersectionality:** The theory of how discriminatory power structures interact in the lives of non-whites across gender, race, ethnicity, economic status, etc. Mapping one’s identities within and outside dominant culture may clarify ways in which oppression is compounded or ways in which an individual may simultaneously experience privilege and oppression.

**Institutional Racism:** Refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create disadvantages for groups classified as people of color. (*Flipping the Script: White Privilege and Community Building*)

**Microaggressions:** Are brief, everyday verbal and nonverbal exchanges that insult, belittle, or send negative messages targeted at certain individuals because of their marginalized group membership.

Microaggressions include statements that:

- Repeat or affirm stereotypes about a socially marginalized group
- Position the dominant culture as normal and the other as abnormal
- Exclude, negate, or nullify the thoughts, feelings, and reality of a person belonging to a socially marginalized group
- Minimize the existence of discrimination against a socially marginalized group

**Oppression:** Systemic devaluing, undermining, marginalization, and disadvantaging of certain social identities in contrast to the privileged norm; when some people are denied something of value, while others have ready access. (*WPC Glossary from 14<sup>th</sup> Annual White Privilege Conference Handbook*)

**Power:** Refers to the ability to control one's environment and / or influence decision making.

**Privilege:** Refers to the myriad of unearned social advantages, benefits, and courtesies that come with belonging to a socially constructed and sanctioned dominant group.

**Racial Justice:** Proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes, and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all. To work toward Racial Justice we must confront the societal, cultural, and institutional beliefs and practices that subordinate and oppress one race for the benefit of another. (*Citizens Uprooting Racism, Racial Justice Conference*)

**Social Justice:** The work of taking personal responsibility to promote equitable access to power, civil liberties, wealth, human rights, upward mobility and healthful and fulfilling lives for all members of society. The taking on of this responsibility entail recognizing and leveraging one's own power and privilege for the redistribution of this access.

**Unconscious Bias:** Biases and negative associations that people unknowingly hold. Unconscious biases are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Notably, unconscious bias have been shown to trump individuals stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess (*State of science: Implicit Bias review 2014*)

**Youth Development:** Activities and strategies that involve youth decision making, use youths as resources to implement programs, and build youth assets and strengths that result in improved academic performance and lower-risk behaviors. (*California Department of Education*)

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