Glossaries for Regional Quality Council Work

This resource is intended to be a guide to common terms used in community engagement, quality improvement and equity work. Multiple users can update this living document. To make an entry, please add the word as it falls in alphabetical order.

Key Terms

Ableism

Definitions:

1. A system that places value on people's bodies and minds based on societally constructed ideas of normalcy, intelligence, excellence and productivity. These constructed ideas are deeply rooted in anti-Blackness, eugenics, colonialism and capitalism. This form of systemic oppression leads to people and society determining who is valuable and worthy based on a person's appearance and/or their ability to satisfactorily [re]produce, excel and "behave." You do not have to be disabled to experience ableism. a working definition by Talila "TL" Lewis

Accountability

Definitions:

1. In the context of racial equity work, accountability refers to the ways in which individuals and communities hold themselves to their goals and actions, and acknowledge the values and groups to which they are responsible.

2. To be accountable, one must be visible, with a transparent agenda and process. Invisibility defies examination; it is, in fact, employed in order to avoid detection and examination. Accountability demands commitment. It might be defined as "what kicks in when convenience runs out." Accountability requires some sense of urgency and becoming a true stakeholder in the outcome. Accountability can be externally imposed (legal or organizational requirements), or internally applied

(moral, relational, faith-based, or recognized as some combination of the two) on a continuum from the institutional and organizational level to the individual level. From a relational point of view, accountability is not always doing it right. Sometimes it's really about what happens after it's done wrong.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Glossary 2. Accountability and White Anti-Racist Organizing: Stories from Our Work

Anti-Blackness

Definitions:

1. The Council for Democratizing Education defines anti-Blackness as being a two-part formation that both voids Blackness of value, while systematically marginalizing Black people and their issues. The first form of anti-Blackness is overt racism. Beneath this anti-Black racism is the covert structural and systemic racism which categorically predetermines the socioeconomic status of Blacks in this country. The structure is held in place by anti-Black policies, institutions, and ideologies.

2. The second form of anti-Blackness is the unethical disregard for anti-Black institutions and policies. This disregard is the product of class, race, and/or gender privilege certain individuals experience due to anti-Black institutions and policies. This form of anti-Blackness is protected by the first form of overt racism.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Glossary 2. The Movement for Black Lives Matter

Accessibility

Definitions:

1. The quality of being possible to get into, use, make use of.

Used by: 1. The Office of Federal Compliance Programs

Advocacy

Definitions:

1. The strategic use of information and action to shape opinions, policies and practices that affect people's lives.

Used by: 1. Open Source Leadership Strategies

Ageism

Definitions:

1. The term "ageism" refers to two concepts: a socially constructed way of thinking about older persons based on negative attitudes and stereotypes about aging and a tendency to structure society based on an assumption that everyone is young, thereby failing to respond appropriately to the real needs of older persons. Age discrimination is often not taken as seriously as other forms of discrimination. However, it can have the same economic, social and psychological impact as any other form of discrimination.

Used by: 1. University of Calgary

Ally

Definitions:

1. 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.

2. Allies commit to reducing their own complicity or collusion in oppression of those groups and invest in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression.

3. A member of a dominant or privileged (race, gender, class, citizenship, etc.) social group who works for justice and equity with members of non-dominant social groups (or those with less privilege within a social grouping). *The social group of less privilege that you work with may label you “an ally”, but it is bad form for you to proclaim the label for yourself.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools, 2. Open Source Leadership Strategies 3. Generocity

American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA)

Definition:

1. Prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications and access to state and local government' programs and services.

Used by: 1. U.S Department of Labor 2. Invisible Disability Project

Anti-Racism

Definition:

1. Anti-Racism is defined as the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach, and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Assistive Technology Device

Definition:

1. Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

Used by: 1. Technology Related Assistance to Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1988 (Tech Act) 2. Disability Benefits 101

Barrier

Definition:

1. A barrier is a physical or societal structure, design, practice or rule that prevents or impedes individuals from accessing a service or community life.

Used by: 1. University of Calgary

Capitalism

Definitions:

1. An economic system in which certain people or companies own the majority of the wealth and resources, and are able to make decisions that impact those who need money, food, shelter, etc. In capitalism, the world is divided into two categories: those who have things/those who want things; those who sell things/those who buy things. One common feature of capitalism is a high level of competition; the idea that there is not enough to go around and that you have to fight to get what you need, by being better, faster, smarter and stronger than other people.

Used by:1. Sins Invaild. Skin, Tooth and Bone: The Basis of Movement is Our People. A Disability Justice Primer. (2nd ed.)

Capitalist Domination

Definition:

1. A system in which people and companies who own resources within the system of Capitalism have control or influence over people's lives and ability to survive

Used by: 1. Sins Invaild. Skin, Tooth and Bone: The Basis of Movement is Our People. A Disability Justice Primer. (2nd ed.)

Classism

Definition:

1. The cultural, institutional and individual set of practices and beliefs that assign value to people according to their socio-economic status, thereby resulting in differential treatment.

Used by: 1. University of Calgary

Colonialism

Definitions:

1. The formal process of an organized group or government taking land, resources, medicine, histories and body-and land-autonomy away from the existing Indigenous peoples.

Used by: 1. Sins Invaild. Skin, Tooth and Bone: The Basis of Movement is Our People. A Disability Justice Primer. (2nd ed.)

Colonization

Definition:

1. Colonization can be defined as some form of invasion, dispossession and subjugation of a people. The invasion need not be military; it can begin—or continue—as geographical intrusion in the form of agricultural, urban or industrial encroachments. The result of such incursion is the dispossession of vast amounts of lands from the original inhabitants. This is often legalized after the fact. The long-term result of such massive dispossession is institutionalized inequality. The colonizer/colonized relationship is by nature an unequal one that benefits the colonizer at the expense of the colonized. Ongoing and legacy Colonialism impact power relations in most of the world today. For example, white supremacy as a philosophy was developed largely to justify European colonial exploitation of the Global South (including enslaving African peoples, extracting resources from much of Asia and Latin America, and enshrining cultural norms of whiteness as desirable both in colonizing and colonizer nations). See also: Decolonization.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Community Engagement

Definition:

1. The collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in the context of partnership and reciprocity. It can involve partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and

influence systems and serve as catalysts for initiating and/or changing policies, programs, and practices.

Used by: 1. Virginia Commonwealth University
Locally used by: Metropolitan Council

Community Outreach

Definition:

1. The application and provision of institutional resources, knowledge or services that directly benefits the community. Examples include music concerts, athletic events, student volunteers, public lectures, or health fairs.

Used by: 1. Virginia Commonwealth University

Consent

Definition:

1. A clear and unambiguous agreement, expressed outwardly through mutually understandable words or actions, to engage in a particular activity." Consent can be withdrawn by either party at any point. Consent must be voluntarily given and may not be valid if a person is being subjected to actions or behaviors that elicit emotional, psychological, physical, reputational, financial pressure, threat, intimidation, or fear (coercion or force).

Used by: 1. University of Michigan

Cultural Appropriation

Definition:

1. Theft of cultural elements for one's own use, commodification, or profit — including symbols, art, language, customs, etc. — often without understanding, acknowledgement, or respect for its value in the original culture. Results from the assumption of a dominant (i.e. white) culture's right to take other cultural elements.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Culture

Definition:

1. A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors and styles of communication.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Cultural White Privilege

Definition:

1. A set of dominant cultural assumptions about what is good, normal or appropriate that reflects Western European white world views and dismisses or demonizes other world views.

Used by: 1. White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women Studies. Peggy McIntosh. 1988. 2. Transforming White Privilege: A 21st Century Leadership Capacity, CAPD, MP Associates, World Trust Educational Services, 2012.

Discrimination

Definition:

1. The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion and other categories.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Disability Justice

Definitions:

1. A movement and framework recognizing intersectionality and the oppressive impact of capitalism, colonialism, and ableism.

Ten (10) principles, each offering new opportunities for movement builders:

- **Intersectionality**: " We do not live single issue lives"-Audre Lorde, Ableism, coupled with white supremacy, supported by capitalism, underscored by heteropatriarchy, has rendered the vast majority of the world "invalid."

- **Leadership by the most impacted:** "We are led by those who know most about these systems"-Aurora Levins Morales. By centering the leadership of most impacted, we keep ourselves grounded in real-world problems and find creative strategies for resistance
- **Anti-Capitalist Politics:** In an economy that sees land and humans as components of profit, we are anti-capitalist by the nature of having non-conforming bodymind
- **Cross-Movement Solidarity:** Shifting how social justice movements understand disability and contextualize ableism, disability justice lends itself to politics of alliance.
- **Recognizing Wholeness**: People have inherent worth outside of commodity relations and capitalist notions of productivity. Each person is full of history and life experience
- **Sustainability:** We pace ourselves, individually and collectively, to be sustained long term. Our embodied experiences guide us toward ongoing justice and liberation.
- **Commitment to Cross-Disability Solidarity:** We honor the insights and participation of all of our community members, knowing that isolation undermines collective liberation
- **Interdependence:** We meet each other's needs as we build toward liberation, knowing that state solutions inevitably extend into further control over our lives.
- **Collective Access:** As Brown, Black and Queer-bodied disabled people; we bring flexibility and creative nuance that go beyond able-bodied/minded normativity, to be in community with each other.
- **Collective Liberation:** No body or mind can be left behind only moving together can we accomplish the revolution we require.

Used by: 1. Sins Invaild

Diversity

Definition:

1. Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad

definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender — the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used — but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values.

*It is important to note that many activists and thinkers critique diversity alone as a strategy. For instance, Baltimore Racial Justice Action states: **"Diversity is silent on the subject of equity. In an anti-oppression context, therefore, the issue is not diversity, but rather equity.** Often when people talk about diversity, they are thinking only of the "non-dominant" groups."

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Eugenics

Definition:

1. The practice of controlling a population by deciding who is born, who is able to have kids, who is given healthcare and who is allowed or encouraged to die, in order to create a specific "desirable" population. Eugenics can include genetic engineering, forced sterilization and birth control, assisted suicide, and other mechanism through which people in power get to decide who is worth existing.

Used by: 1. Sins Invaild. Skin, Tooth and Bone: The Basis of Movement is Our People. A Disability Justice Primer. (2nd ed.)

Equality

Definition:

1. Access or provision of equal opportunities, where individuals are protected from being discriminated against. Equality implies elements of sameness in opportunity, but does not focus on fairness in outcomes. Equality assumes an equal "starting place" of all individuals.

Used by: 1. Association for Size, Diversity and Health (ASDAH)

Equity

Definition:

1. A state in which all people in a given society share equal rights and opportunities.

Note: Equity is giving everyone what they need to be successful. Equality is treating everyone the same. Equality aims to promote fairness, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same help. Equity appears unfair, but it actively moves everyone closer to success by "leveling the playing field." But not everyone starts at the same place, and not everyone has the same needs.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Ethnicity

Definition:

1. A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Gentrification

Definition:

1. Demographic shifts that usually occur in big cities in which upper-middle class and/or racially privileged individuals and businesses move into historically working class and poor and/or racially oppressed neighborhoods and communities.

Used by: 1. Association for Size, Diversity and Health (ASDAH)

Gender Expression

Definition:

1. External manifestations of gender, expressed through a person's name, pronouns, clothing, haircut, behavior, voice, and/or body characteristics. Society identifies these cues as masculine and feminine, although what is considered masculine or feminine changes over time and varies by culture. Typically, transgender people seek to align their

gender expression with their gender identity, rather than the sex they were assigned at birth.

Used by: 1. GLAAD

Gender Identity

Definition:

1. A person's internal, deeply held sense of their gender. For transgender people, their own internal gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. Most people have a gender identity of man or woman (or boy or girl). For some people, their gender identity does not fit neatly into one of those two choices (see non-binary and/or genderqueer below.) Unlike gender expression, (see above) gender identity is not visible to others.

Used by: 1. GLAAD

Gender Non-Conforming

Definition:

1. A term used to describe some people whose gender expression is different from conventional expectations of masculinity and femininity. Please note that not all gender non-conforming people identify as transgender; nor are all transgender people gender non-conforming. Many people have gender expressions that are not entirely conventional – that fact alone does not make them transgender. Many transgender men and women have gender expressions that are conventionally masculine or feminine. Simply being transgender does not make someone gender non-conforming. The term is not a synonym for transgender or transsexual and should only be used if someone self-identifies as gender non-conforming.

Used by: 1. GLAAD

Heterosexual

Definition:

1. An adjective used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic, and/ or emotional attraction is to people of the opposite sex. Also straight.

Used by: 1. GLAAD

Homophobia

Definition:

1. Fear of people attracted to the same sex. Intolerance, bias, or prejudice is usually a more accurate description of antipathy toward LGBTQ people.

Used by: 1. GLAAD

Historically Underrepresented

Definition:

1. This term refers to groups who have been denied access and/or suffered past institutional discrimination in the United States and, according to the Census and other federal measuring tools, includes African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanics or Chicanos/Latinos, and Native Americans. This is revealed by an imbalance in the representation of different groups in common pursuits such as education, jobs, and housing, resulting in marginalization for some groups and individuals and not for others, relative to the number of individuals who are members of the population involved. Other groups in the United States have been marginalized and are currently underrepresented. These groups may include but are not limited to: Other ethnicities, Adult learners, Veterans, People with disabilities, Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals, Different religious groups, and Different economic backgrounds.

   Note: Marginalized: Excluded, ignored, or relegated to the outer edge of a group/society/community.

Used by: 1. Improving the health and wellbeing of persons with disabilities and Emory University Office of Equity and Inclusion

Implicit Bias

Definition:

1. Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals' attitudes and actions, thus

creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves. Notably, implicit biases 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.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Inclusion

Definition:

1. Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policymaking historically dictated by dominant culture.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Independent Living (IL)

Definitions:

1. Refers to the philosophy that people with disabilities should be able to make decisions that affect their own lives.

2. A civil rights movement that advocates for equal participation in community life, and a service system made up of centers for independent living.

Note: In practice, independent living focuses on social attitudes and physical barriers rather than a person's limitations. Instead of emphasizing a person's disability, independent living stresses an individual's right to certain types of help and assistance to succeed. This assistance can include supports such as adaptations to the living space, personal assistance or changing policies to promote the ability to live independently.

Used by: 1. Research and Training Center on Independent Living

Identity/Disability-First Language

Definition:

1. When discussing certain disability cultural groups that explicitly describe themselves with disability-first language. Thus, while it is generally a safe bet to use people-first language, there are members of certain disability groups in the US who prefer not to use it, such as the American

Deaf community and a number of Autistic people/Autistics. The basic reason behind members of these groups' dislike for the application of people-first language to themselves is that they consider their disabilities to be inseparable parts of who they are.

Used by: 1. Syracuse University's Disability Cultural Center

Individual Racism

Definition:

1. Individual racism refers to the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of individuals that support or perpetuate racism. Individual racism can be deliberate, or the individual may act to perpetuate or support racism without knowing that is what he or she is doing.

Example: Telling a racist joke, using a racial epithet, believing in the inherent superiority of whites over other groups, or avoiding people of color whom you do not know personally, but not whites whom you do not know personally (e.g., white people crossing the street to avoid a group of Latino/a young people; locking their doors when they see African American families sitting on their doorsteps in a city neighborhood; or not hiring a person of color because "something doesn't feel right")

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Informed Choice

Definition:

1. Making decisions based on complete and accurate information about your specific situation.
2. People have real options to purse the life they want to live.

Note: Informed choice happens through talking with individuals receiving services and the people who help make decisions about that individuals life. It means that the person being supported knows and understands all their options, the barriers, the risks and benefits of their decision. Informed choice involves person-centered practices.

Used by: 1. Minnesota Department of Human Services 2. Disability Benefits-101

Institutional Racism

Definition:

1. 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 advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color.

Example: Government policies that explicitly restricted the ability of people to get loans to buy or improve their homes in neighborhoods with high concentrations of African Americans (also known as "red-lining") or city sanitation department policies that concentrate trash transfer stations and other environmental hazards disproportionately in communities of color.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Institutional White Privilege

Definition:

1. Policies, practices and behaviors of institutions -- such as schools, banks, non-profits or the Supreme Court -- that have the effect of maintaining or increasing accumulated advantages for those groups currently defined as white, and maintaining or increasing disadvantages for those racial or ethnic groups not defined as white. The ability of institutions to survive and thrive even when their policies, practices and behaviors maintain, expand or fail to redress accumulated disadvantages and/or inequitable outcomes for people of color.

Used by: 1. White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women Studies. Peggy McIntosh. 1988. 2. Transforming White Privilege: A 21st Century Leadership Capacity, CAPD, MP Associates, World Trust Educational Services, 2012.

Inspirational Porn

Definition:

1. Objectifying one group of people for the benefit of another group of people.

2. Used in the disability community as a pejorative term; someone with a disability is a token success for others; being admired solely for having a disability.

Used by: 1. Invisible Disability Project 2. Stella Young

Intersectionality

Definition:

1. The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage; a theoretical approach based on such a premise."

2. Exposing [one's] multiple identities can help clarify the ways in which a person can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression. For example, a Black woman in America does not experience gender inequalities in exactly the same way as a white woman, nor racial oppression identical to that experienced by a Black man. Each race and gender intersection produces a qualitatively distinct life.

Used by: 1. Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2. Racial Equity Tools

Invisible Disability (Hidden Disability)

Definition:

1. An invisible disability is a physical, mental or neurological condition that is not visible from the outside, yet can limit or challenge a person's movements, senses, or activities.

Used by: 1. Invisible Disabilities Association

LGBTQ

Definition:

1. Acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer. Sometimes, when the Q is seen at the end of LGBT, it can also mean questioning. LGBT and/or GLBT are also often used. The term "gay community" should be avoided, as it does not accurately reflect the diversity of the community. Rather, LGBTQ community is preferred.

Used by: 1. GLAAD

Medical Assistance (MA)

Definition:

1. A state-run health care program that pays medical expenses for people who are disabled, young, elderly, poor, or pregnant. If you meet program requirements, MA will help pay for a variety of medical services including visits to the doctor, hospital stays, medical equipment, home care services, and prescription drugs.

Used by: 1. Disability Benefits-101

Medical Assistance (MA) - Wavier Programs

Definition:

1. Serve people and provide the services necessary to allow them to live in the community.

2. Here are four MA-Waiver programs available to Minnesotans with a disability:
    - The Community Alternative Care (CAC) Waiver provides services to people who are chronically ill and need the level of care provided in a hospital.
    - The Community Access for Disability Inclusion (CADI) Waiver serves people with disabilities who need the level of care offered in a nursing facility.
    - The Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver provides services to people with developmental disabilities or related conditions.
    - The Brain Injury (BI) Waiver provides services to people with brain injuries.

Note: Not all people with disabilities will qualify for a MA-Waiver program; each program serves a different target population and has its own set of eligibility criteria.

Used by: 1. Disability Benefits-101

Medical Model of Disability

Definition:

1. Disability as a feature of the person, directly caused by disease, trauma or health conditions, which requires medical care provided in the form of individual treatment by professionals.

Note: Disability rights advocates say this view promotes a negative, disempowered image of people with disabilities. It makes the "abnormal" individual have the problem rather than assigning the problem to the political, social, and physical environment. It also creates low expectations and leads to people losing independence, choice and control in their own lives.

Used by: 1. Research and Training on Independent Living

Microaggression

Definition:

1. The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Movement Building

Definitions:

1. Movement building is the effort of social change agents to engage power holders and the broader society in addressing a systemic problem or injustice while promoting an alternative vision or solution. Movement building requires a range of intersecting approaches through a set of distinct stages over a long-term period of time. Through movement building, organizers can
    - Propose solutions to the root causes of social problems;
    - Enable people to exercise their collective power;
    - Humanize groups that have been denied basic human rights and improve conditions for the groups affected;
    - Create structural change by building something larger than a particular organization or campaign; and
    - Promote visions and values for society based on fairness, justice and democracy

Used By: 1. Racial Equity Tools 2. Roots: Building the Power of Communities of Color to Challenge Structural Racism

Natural Supports

Definition:

1. When friends, neighbors, relatives, coworkers, and others volunteer to help a person with a disability live a more independent life, they are called "natural" social supports.

Used by: 1. Research and Training on Independent Living

Oppression

Definition:

1. The systematic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group. Rita Hardiman and Bailey Jackson state that oppression exists when the following 4 conditions are found:
    - the oppressor group has the power to define reality for themselves and others,
    - the target groups take in and internalize the negative messages about them and end up cooperating with the oppressors (thinking and acting like them),
    - genocide, harassment, and discrimination are systematic and institutionalized, so that individuals are not necessary to keep it going, and,
    - members of both the oppressor and target groups are socialized to play their roles as normal and correct.

Oppression = Power + Prejudice

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Out

Definition:

1. A person who self-identifies as LGBTQ in their personal, public, and/or professional lives. For Example: Ricky Martin is an out pop star from Puerto Rico. Preferred to openly gay.

Used by: 1. GLAAD

People of Color

Definition:

1. Often the preferred collective term for referring to non-White racial groups. Racial justice advocates have been using the term “people of color” (not to be confused with the pejorative “colored people”) since the late 1970s as an inclusive and unifying frame across different racial groups that are not White, to address racial inequities. While “people of color” can be a politically useful term, and describes people with their own attributes (as opposed to what they are not, e.g., “non-White”).

Note: It is also important whenever possible to identify people through their own racial/ethnic group, as each has its own distinct experience and meaning and may be more appropriate.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

People-First Language

Definition:

1. When referring to an individual with (dis)abilities it is important to identify them as a person with a (dis)ability, not a disabled person; person on the autism spectrum, not autistic or autistic person.

2. The “People First” mentality should also be applied when discussing mental illness. A person with a mental illness is a person first. When referring to an individual with mental illness it is important to identify them as a person living with a mental illness, rather than a mentally ill person.

3. Use the term accessible rather than disabled or handicapped to refer to facilities. Avoid outdated, offensive words such as handicapped, retarded, crazy, etc. Avoid using self-diagnosing language such as, “I'm OCD,” and “I’m having an anxiety attack right now,” unless these mental illnesses have been diagnosed.

Person-Centered Planning

Definition:

1. Person centered planning is a process. The process includes a series of meetings with a facilitator. A facilitator is someone who is trained in person centered thinking, approaches and tools. During these meetings, the facilitator learns about the person "at the center"—the person with the disability.

2. The process also involves the person's "network," which includes family, friends, co-workers, professionals and other important people in the person's life. This process can help people come up with a plan for next steps in areas where they want to grow more or feel stuck—like work, where they live, friendships, dating, school or hobbies.

Used by: 1. Cornell University's Person Centered Planning Education 2. MN Department of Human Services' Person Centered Practices 3. A National Gateway to Self-Determination: What is Self-Determination and Why is it Important?
Locally used by: 1. The Arc Minnesota

Person-Centered Thinking

Definition:

1. It is a belief and mindset that people are experts in what they want for their life and how they want to live it. Someone is person centered when s/he is interested in a person's gifts and how the person can share those with others. Person centered thinking goes beyond a person's disability label. It honors and respects the individual as a whole person who is valued.

Used by: 1. Cornell University's Person Centered Planning Education 2. MN Department of Human Services' Person Centered Practices 3. A National Gateway to Self-Determination: What is Self-Determination and Why is it Important?
Locally used by: 1. The Arc Minnesota

Power

Definitions:

1. "Power" is a relational term. It can only be understood as a relationship between human beings in a specific historical, economic and social setting. It must be exercised to be visible.

- Power is control of, or access to, those institutions sanctioned by the state. (Definition by Barbara Major of People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, New Orleans)
- Power is the ability to define reality and to convince other people that it is their definition. (Definition by Dr. Wade Nobles)
- Power is ownership and control of the major resources of a state; and the capacity to make and enforce decisions based on this ownership and control;(Alternative definition to #1)
- Power is the capacity of a group of people to decide what they want and to act in an organized way to get it.
- (In terms of an individual), power is the capacity to act.

Used by: 1. Colours of Resistance

Prejudice

Definition:

1. A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Prison Industrial Complex

Definition:

1. The overlapping interests of government and corporations that use surveillance, policing and imprisonment as solutions to economic, social and political problems.

Used by: 1. Sins Invaild. Skin, Tooth and Bone: The Basis of Movement is Our People. A Disability Justice Primer. (2nd ed.)

Privilege

Definition:

1. Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. white privilege, male

privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because we're taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Queer

Definition:

1. An adjective used by some people, particularly younger people, whose sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual (e.g. queer person, queer woman). Typically, for those who identify as queer, the terms lesbian, gay, and bisexual are perceived to be too limiting and/or fraught with cultural connotations they feel don't apply to them. Some people may use queer, or more commonly genderqueer, to describe their gender identity and/or gender expression (see non-binary and/or genderqueer below). Once considered a pejorative term, queer has been reclaimed by some LGBT people to describe themselves; however, it is not a universally accepted term even within the LGBT community. When Q is seen at the end of LGBT, it typically means queer and, less often, questioning.

Used by: 1. GLAAD

Race

Definition:

1. For many people, it comes as a surprise that racial categorization schemes were invented by scientists to support worldviews that viewed some groups of people as superior and some as inferior. There are three important concepts linked to this fact:
    - Race is a made-up social construct, and not an actual biological fact
    - Race designations have changed over time. Some groups that are considered "white" in the United States today were considered "non-white" in previous eras, in U.S. Census data and in mass media and popular culture (for example, Irish, Italian and Jewish people).
    - The way in which racial categorizations are enforced (the shape of racism) has also changed over time. For example, the racial

designation of Asian American and Pacific Islander changed four times in the 19th century. That is, they were defined at times as white and at other times as not white. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, as designated groups, have been used by whites at different times in history to compete with African American labor.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Racial Equity

Definition:

1. Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Reclaimed Identity

Definition:

1. When members of a group "reclaim" a word, they take a term that was previously used against them as a slur, and give it a positive meaning, within that particular group, as an expression of solidarity and pride in one's identity. Some members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities, for example, have reclaimed the term "queer," a longtime degrading term for LGBT peoples. Similarly, some disability cultural groups have reclaimed negative terms like "crip".

Note: In some cases, reclaimed terms may be very context-dependent, continuing to retain their original, negative connotations outside of the communities that seek to reclaim them. While it may be appropriate for someone who is a member of a group to use a term in a reclaimed way due to having the personal experiences that allow them to understand when, why, and how to use such a term (and the implications of using it the wrong way), it may not be appropriate for someone outside of the group to do so.

Used by: 1. 1. Syracuse University's Disability Cultural Center 2. Invisible Disability Project

Social Model of Disability

Definition:

1. The social model of disability views disability as socially constructed and a consequence of society's lack of awareness and concern about those who may require some modifications to live full, productive lives.

2. The model, referred to by some as the barriers model, views the medical diagnosis, illness or injury as having no part in disability. Rather, society is considered the cause of disability, which is considered a consequence of an environment created for the able-bodied majority.

Used by: 1. Improving the health and wellbeing of persons with disabilities

State Terrorism/Violence

Definitions:

1. Terrorism carried out or sponsored by a government, which involves deliberate attacks on civilians, for the purpose of attaining a political or religious goal
2. Acts of violence committed by an official state, military or sponsored by a sovereign government outside of the context of a declared war, which target civilians or show a disregard for civilian life in attacking targets—either people or facilities.

Used by: 1. Segen's Medical Dictionary

Structural Racism

Definition:

1. Structural racialization connotes the dynamic process that creates cumulative and durable inequalities based on race. Interactions between individuals are shaped by and reflect underlying and often hidden structures that shape biases and create disparate outcomes even in the absence of racist actors or racist intentions. The presence of structural

racialization is evidenced by consistent differences in outcomes in education attainment, family wealth and even life span.

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

Structural White Privilege

Definition:

1. A system of white domination that creates and maintains belief systems that make current racial advantages and disadvantages seem normal. The system includes powerful incentives for maintaining white privilege and its consequences, and powerful negative consequences for trying to interrupt white privilege or reduce its consequences in meaningful ways. The system includes internal and external manifestations at the individual, interpersonal, cultural and institutional levels.

   The accumulated and interrelated advantages and disadvantages of white privilege that are reflected in racial/ethnic inequities in life-expectancy and other health outcomes, income and wealth and other outcomes, in part through different access to opportunities and resources. These differences are maintained in part by denying that these advantages and disadvantages exist at the structural, institutional, cultural, interpersonal and individual levels and by refusing to redress them or eliminate the systems, policies, practices, cultural norms and other behaviors and assumptions that maintain them.

Used by: 1. White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women Studies. Peggy McIntosh. 1988. 2. Transforming White Privilege: A 21st Century Leadership Capacity, CAPD, MP Associates, World Trust Educational Services, 2012.

Suffers from/Stricken with

Definition:

1. These terms carry the assumption that a person with a disability is suffering or has a reduced quality of life. It is preferable to use neutral language when describing a person who has a disability, simply stating the facts about the nature of the disability.
   Example: “He has muscular dystrophy.”

Used by: 1. National Center on Disability and Journalism 2. National Disability Authority

Systemic Racism

Definitions:

1. Includes the policies and practices entrenched in established institutions, which result in the exclusion or promotion of designated groups. It differs from overt discrimination in that no individual intent is necessary. It manifests itself in two ways:
    - Institutional racism: racial discrimination that derives from individuals carrying out the dictates of others who are prejudiced or of a prejudiced society
    - Structural racism: inequalities rooted in the system-wide operation of a society that excludes substantial numbers of members of particular groups from significant participation in major social institutions.

Used by: 1. ACLRC

Tokenizing

Definition:

1. Doing outreach to diverse communities to demonstrate you have a diverse organization. Instead, consider how you can ensure there are specific roles for people to meaningfully contribute and provide input that will truly impact your organization. Try not to presume that the views or input of individuals represent the views or input of an entire diverse community. To help overcome this, seek to engage a cross-section of community members.

Used by: 1. Global Outreach in Local Communities, Office of Citizen Involvement - Multnomah County 2015

Transgender

Definition:

1. An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. People under the transgender umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms - including transgender. Some of those terms are defined below. Use the descriptive term preferred by the person. Many transgender people are prescribed hormones by their doctors to bring their bodies into alignment with their gender identity. Some undergo surgery as well. But not all transgender people can or will take those steps, and a transgender identity is not dependent upon physical appearance or medical procedures.

Used By: 1. GLAAD

Two-Spirit

Definition:

1. Refers to a person who has both a masculine and a feminine spirit. The term is used by some Indigenous people to describe their sexual gender and/or spiritual identity.

Note: As an umbrella term it may encompass same-sex attraction and a wide variety of gender variance, including people who might be described in Western culture as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, gender queer, cross-dressers or who have multiple gender identities. Two-spirit can also include relationships that could be considered poly.

Used by: 1. University of Calgary 2. Researching for LGBTQ2S+ Health

Underrepresented

Definition:

1. This group includes underserved individuals (African Americans/black, Asian, Hispanic, American Indian, and multiracial) plus first-generation students and low-income students. In specific instances, other groups of students may be considered underrepresented. For example, in a traditionally female discipline, males may be considered underrepresented.

Used by: 1. Emory University Office of Equity and Inclusion

Locally used by: Three Rivers Parks District

Underserved

Definition:

1. Underserved populations are ones that are disadvantaged in relation to other groups because of structural/societal obstacles and disparities

Used by: 1. Emory University Office of Equity and Inclusion

White Supremacy Culture

Definition:

1. White Supremacy Culture refers to the dominant, unquestioned standards of behavior and ways of functioning embodied by the vast majority of institutions in the United States. These standards may be seen as mainstream, dominant cultural practices; they have evolved from the United States' history of white supremacy. Because it is so normalized it can be hard to see, which only adds to its powerful hold. In many ways, it is indistinguishable from what we might call U.S. culture or norms – a focus on individuals over groups, for example, or an emphasis on the written word as a form of professional communication. But it operates in even more subtle ways, by actually defining what "normal" is – and likewise, what "professional," "effective," or even "good" is. In turn, white culture also defines what is not good, "at risk," or "unsustainable." White culture values some ways – ways that are more familiar and come more naturally to those from a white, western tradition – of thinking, behaving, deciding, and knowing, while devaluing or rendering invisible other ways. And it does this without ever having to explicitly say so...

Used by: 1. Racial Equity Tools

White Privilege

Definitions:

1. Refers to the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed on people solely because they are white. Generally, white people who experience such privilege.

Used by: 1. White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women Studies. Peggy McIntosh. 1988. 2.

Transforming White Privilege: A 21st Century Leadership Capacity, CAPD, MP Associates, World Trust Educational Services, 2012.

Victim/Survivor

Definition:

1. This term been used to express the intersectional experiences of the most marginalized groups affected by sexual assault, violence, and abuse such as Black cis-women, Black trans-women, and gender non-conforming folks of color who have historically never been seen as victims in the eyes of culture, community, or the law.

2. Victim-survivor acknowledges the reality of vulnerability and triumph as well as the need to acknowledge various connected oppressions that can further complicate the already traumatic experience of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and abuse.

Note: There is not one term that adequately identifies the experiences and realities of every person affected by sexual violence, assault, intimate partner violence, and abuse. The terms used to denote those affected by these forms of violence are just as varied as the experiences of those who have been assaulted or attacked. To reflect that a terrible act was done to someone without stripping their agency, the following terms place the onus of wrongdoing on the preparator or attacker rather than the person who was attacked: 'a person who was subjected to sexual violence'; 'a person who was sexually assaulted'; and 'a person who survived sexual abuse'.

Used by: 1. FORCE 2. Femifesto

Xenophobia

Definition:

1. A culturally based fear of outsiders. Xenophobia has often been associated with the hostile reception given to those who immigrate into societies and communities.

Used by: 1. Bordeau, J. (2010). Xenophobia: the violence of fear and hate.

Metro REGIONAL QUALITY COUNCIL

Gender-Inclusive Language Guidelines

Pronouns:

Plural pronouns are often accepted as gender-neutral singular pronouns. It is permissible and grammatically correct, per MLA and APA guidelines, to rewrite singular pronounces using a form of 'they' if you cannot rephrase your sentence to be plural rather than singular.

For example:

Each author was chosen based on **his or her** research.

Authors were chosen based on **their** research.

Here is a list of the most common pronouns used. As always, use the preferred pronouns of the individual. You may see more pronouns outside of this list.

Subjective	Objective	Possessive Adjective	Possessive Pronouns	Reflexive	Pronunciation
She	Her	Her	Hers	Herself	Pronounced as it looks
He	Him	His	His	Himself	Pronounced as it looks
Ze	Zim	Zir	Zirs	Zirself	Pronounced Zay or Zee/Zim (rhymes with them)/ Zir (rhymes with their)
They	Them	Their	Theirs	Themselves	Pronounced as it looks

Noun Usage

In an effort to be more inclusive, the Department of Diversity Initiatives encourages you to use gender-neutral nouns. Gender-neutral language helps eliminate assumptions about an individual's gender identity or sexual orientation based upon their appearance.

Below is a list of everyday words that can be rephrased in gender-neutral terms.

Instead of...	Use...
Fireman	Firefighter
Policeman	Police Officer
Salesmen	Salesperson, sales associate
Mailman	Mail carrier
Man and wife	Husband and wife; partners


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