

ADDRESSING Identities

Content adapted with permission from the ADDRESSING Framework Hays, 2016

General information about this self-assessment: All definitions provided in this worksheet are considered working and flexible. Labeling and categorizing socio-cultural identities and related experiences is intended to encourage open and supportive dialogue around complex and multifaceted categories. This self-assessment seeks to both validate your lived experiences and to encourage you to critically examine your identities in pursuit of enhanced well-being, resilience, and adaptive community action. Examples of identities provided are by no means exhaustive and are included to provide a range of potential examples. While the ADDRESSING Framework provides individual definitions of identities it is important to remember that it is the *interaction* (e.g., intersectionality) of all of these identities that shape how we move through the world. *Experiences of historically more or less “privilege or power” are based on US American population-based data.*

Introducing the three columns of this self-assessment:

(1) *The first column* provides a socio-cultural identity and a definition. It also asks you to consider how you identify with regards to this identity. How you identify is often based on how you identify in this moment, however, you may also identify based on previous experiences or from a combination of experiences – pick what feels most accurate and validating for you.

(2) *The second column* provides prompts aimed at helping you explore how you experience this identity. You may check as many or as few boxes as feels relevant to your experience. This column also asks you about how much you think about this identity, meaning how often you think about a given identity – this may change based on where you are, who you are with, or how you are feeling.

(3) *The third column* provides three questions to reflect upon with regards to this identity. Identities are rarely experienced in isolation and our lived experiences are the result of the intersections of all of our identities (e.g., intersectionality). We have noticed that spending time to examine different parts of our identity helps us better understand how they all interact together, like understanding all the different ingredients in a meal in order to understand why it tastes, smells, and looks the way it does.

As you work through this self-assessment notice what thoughts, feelings, or behaviors emerge. Does something feel uncomfortable? Does something make you feel angry, confused, or sad? Does something make you feel hopeful? Does something make you feel proud? Whatever your experience – take note of it and use that to inform how you can most effectively use this self-assessment.

Definitions and how you identify	About this identity...	Reflection and application questions
<p>Age and generational influences</p> <p><u>Definition</u>: A length of time that a person has lived. How living during certain time periods (eras) might influence identity and experiences.</p> <p>◆ How do you identify? _____</p>	<p>1) ___ Historically experienced <u>more privilege</u> or power Examples: Adult or ___ Historically experienced <u>more barriers</u> or stigma Examples: Children, Adolescent, Older Adult, Elder</p> <p>2) ___ Visible ___ Hidden ___ Concealable</p> <p>3) If you checked "more barriers" above, do you experience this identity as a source of: ___ Strength ___ Stress ___ Both ___ Neither</p> <p>4) How much do you think about this identity? ____ (1=never, 5=very often)</p>	<p>1) Does this identity impact your mood or mental health (how you think, feel, behave)? ____ (1=not at all, 5=completely). If so, in what ways does this identity affect your mental health?</p> <p>2) Does this identity interact with other identities, causing more or less stress? If so, how?</p> <p>3) Considering this aspect of your identity, what is one action you could take going forward to positively influence your treatment/functioning/mood?</p>

<p>Disability status and/or physical health status</p> <p><u>Definition:</u> Functioning and/or impairment that may be physical, developmental, cognitive, intellectual etc. Results in restrictions, limitations and/or modifications in one's ability to participate in day-to-day activities.</p> <p>◆ How do you identify? _____</p>	<p>1) ___ Historically experienced <u>more privilege</u> or power Examples: Able-bodied, physically healthy or ___ Historically experienced <u>more barriers</u> or stigma Examples: Intellectual Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Diabetes, Dementia, Multiple Sclerosis, Breast Cancer, Chronic Pain, Traumatic Brain Injury, HIV, Amputation, etc.</p> <p>2) ___ Visible ___ Hidden ___ Concealable</p> <p>3) ___ Fluid ___ Changing ___ Stable</p> <p>4) If you checked "more barriers" above, do you experience this identity as a source of: ___ Strength ___ Stress ___ Both ___ Neither</p> <p>5) How much do you think about this identity? ____ (1=never, 5=very often)</p>	<p>1) Does this identity impact your mood or mental health (how you think, feel, behave)? ___ (1=not at all, 5=completely). If so, in what ways does this identity affect your mental health?</p> <p>2) Does this identity interact with other identities, causing more or less stress? If so, how?</p> <p>3) Considering this aspect of your identity, what is one action you could take going forward to positively influence your treatment/functioning/mood?</p>
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<p>Diagnosis status (psychological/psychiatric)</p> <p><u>Definition:</u> Presence or absence (or past history) of mental health problems.</p> <p>◆ How do you identify? _____</p>	<p>1) ___ Historically experienced <u>more privilege</u> or power Examples: Absence or assumption of absence of mental health problems. Society’s definition of “good mental health.”</p> <p>or</p> <p>___ Historically experienced <u>more barriers</u> or stigma Examples: Bipolar, Depression, Anxiety, OCD, Schizophrenia, Severe Emotion Dysregulation, Borderline Personality Disorder, PTSD, Substance Use Disorders, etc.</p> <p>2) ___ Visible ___ Hidden ___ Concealable</p> <p>3) ___ Fluid ___ Changing ___ Stable</p> <p>4) If you checked “more barriers” above, do you experience this identity as a source of: ___ Strength ___ Stress ___ Both ___ Neither</p> <p>5) How much do you think about this identity? ___ (1=never, 5=very often)</p>	<p>1) Does this identity impact your mood or mental health (how you think, feel, behave)? ___ (1=not at all, 5=completely). If so, in what ways does this identity affect your mental health?</p> <p>2) Does this identity interact with other identities, causing more or less stress? If so, how?</p> <p>3) Considering this aspect of your identity, what is one action you could take going forward to positively influence your treatment/functioning/mood?</p>
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<p>Religion and spirituality</p> <p><u>Definition:</u> <i>Religion</i> = Institutionalized or culture-bound forms of relating to the sacred.</p> <p><i>Spirituality</i> = Any way of relating to that which is regarded as sacred. May or may not be linked to established institutions and/or traditional conceptualizations of the sacred.</p> <p>◆ How do you identify? _____</p>	<p>1) ___ Historically experienced <u>more privilege</u> or power Examples: Christianity or historically Christian values</p> <p>or</p> <p>___ Historically experienced <u>more barriers</u> or stigma Examples: Judaism, Agnostic, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Atheist, etc.</p> <p>2) ___ Visible ___ Hidden ___ Concealable</p> <p>4) If you checked “more barriers” above, do you experience this identity as a source of: ___ Strength ___ Stress ___ Both ___ Neither</p> <p>5) How much do you think about this identity? ___ (1=never, 5=very often)</p>	<p>1) Does this identity impact your mood or mental health (how you think, feel, behave)? ___ (1=not at all, 5=completely). If so, in what ways does this identity affect your mental health?</p> <p>2) Does this identity interact with other identities, causing more or less stress? If so, how?</p> <p>3) Considering this aspect of your identity, what is one action you could take going forward to positively influence your treatment/functioning/mood?</p>
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<p>Ethnicity and race</p> <p><u>Definition:</u> <i>Ethnicity</i> = A type of culture most often related to shared heritage from a geographical location that develops from within groups. May incorporate one ethnicity or multiple ethnicities.</p> <p>◆ How do you identify? _____</p> <p><i>Race</i> = Categorizes people into socially constructed groups based on external characteristics including skin color, facial features, and hair texture.</p> <p>◆ How do you identify? _____</p>	<p>1a) Ethnicity <input type="checkbox"/> Historically experienced <u>more privilege</u> or power Examples: European-American <input type="checkbox"/> Historically experienced <u>more barriers</u> or stigma Examples: Chinese, Chinese American, Cuban, Syrian, Syrian American, Wampanoag, Filipino, Japanese, Nepali-Bhutanese, Somali Canadian, African, African American, etc.</p> <p>2) <input type="checkbox"/> Visible <input type="checkbox"/> Hidden <input type="checkbox"/> Concealable</p> <p>3) <input type="checkbox"/> Fluid <input type="checkbox"/> Changing <input type="checkbox"/> Stable</p> <p>4) If you checked "more barriers" above, do you experience this identity as a source of: <input type="checkbox"/> Strength <input type="checkbox"/> Stress <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/> Neither</p> <p>5) How much do you think about this identity? ____ (1=never, 5=very often)</p> <p>1b) Race <input type="checkbox"/> Historically experienced <u>more privilege</u> or power Examples: White <input type="checkbox"/> Historically experienced <u>more barriers</u> or stigma Examples: Asian, Black, Latino/a, Multiracial, Middle East and North African (MENA), etc.</p> <p>2) <input type="checkbox"/> Visible <input type="checkbox"/> Hidden <input type="checkbox"/> Concealable</p> <p>3) <input type="checkbox"/> Fluid <input type="checkbox"/> Changing <input type="checkbox"/> Stable</p> <p>4) If you checked "more barriers" above, do you experience this identity as a source of: <input type="checkbox"/> Strength <input type="checkbox"/> Stress <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/> Neither</p> <p>5) How much do you think about this identity? ____ (1=never, 5=very often)</p>	<p>1) Do these identities impact your mood or mental health (how you think, feel, behave)? ____ (1=not at all, 5=completely). If so, in what ways does this identity affect your mental health?</p> <p>2) Do these identities interact with other identities, causing more or less stress? If so, how?</p> <p>3) Considering these aspects of your identity, what is one action you could take going forward to positively influence your treatment/functioning/mood?</p>
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<p>Sexuality</p> <p><u>Definition:</u> Sexual or romantic attraction to persons of ____ gender(s).</p> <p>◆ How do you identify? _____</p>	<p>1) ____ Historically experienced <u>more privilege</u> or power Examples: Straight, heterosexual or ____ Historically experienced <u>more barriers</u> or stigma Examples: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Pansexual, Asexual, Queer, etc.</p> <p>2) ____ Visible ____ Hidden ____ Concealable</p> <p>3) ____ Fluid ____ Changing ____ Stable</p> <p>4) If you checked "more barriers" above, do you experience this identity as a source of: ____ Strength ____ Stress ____ Both ____ Neither</p> <p>5) How much do you think about this identity? ____ (1=never, 5=very often)</p>	<p>1) Does this identity impact your mood or mental health (how you think, feel, behave)? ____ (1=not at all, 5=completely). If so, in what ways does this identity affect your mental health?</p> <p>2) Does this identity interact with other identities, causing more or less stress? If so, how?</p> <p>3) Considering this aspect of your identity, what is one action you could take going forward to positively influence your treatment/functioning/mood?</p>
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<p>Socioeconomic Status (SES)</p> <p><u>Definition:</u> Social standing or class often measured as a combination of education, income, financial access/security, and occupation.</p> <p>How do you identify? _____</p>	<p>1) ___ Historically experienced <u>more privilege</u> or power Examples: Wealthy, upper middle class, highly educated</p> <p>or</p> <p>___ Historically experienced <u>more barriers</u> or stigma Examples: Lower status because of class, education, occupation, income, or location. Working poor, poverty, low income, etc.</p> <p>2) ___ Visible ___ Hidden ___ Concealable</p> <p>3) ___ Fluid ___ Changing ___ Stable</p> <p>4) If you checked "more barriers" above, do you experience this identity as a source of: ___ Strength ___ Stress ___ Both ___ Neither</p> <p>5) How much do you think about this identity? ____ (1=never, 5=very often)</p>	<p>1) Does this identity impact your mood or mental health (how you think, feel, behave)? ____ (1=not at all, 5=completely). If so, in what ways does this identity affect your mental health?</p> <p>2) Does this identity interact with other identities, causing more or less stress? If so, how?</p> <p>3) Considering this aspect of your identity, what is one action you could take going forward to positively influence your treatment/functioning/mood?</p>
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<p>Indigenous heritage</p> <p><u>Definition:</u> <i>Indigenous heritage</i> = Belonging to a group that was colonized or misplaced</p> <p>◆ How do you identify? _____</p>	<p>1a) <i>Immigration Status</i> ___ Historically experienced <u>more privilege</u> or power Examples: Family did not recently immigrate to the country, perceived as "American" ___ Historically experienced <u>more barriers</u> or stigma Examples: Family recently immigrated to U.S.; perceived as coming from somewhere else</p> <p>1b) <i>Indigenous Heritage</i> ___ Historically experienced <u>more privilege</u> or power Examples: Historically or current colonizing culture, European American, etc. ___ Historically experienced <u>more barriers</u> or stigma Examples: American Indian, Native Alaskan, Native Hawaiians, First Peoples, Aboriginal, etc.</p> <p>2) ___ Visible ___ Hidden ___ Concealable</p> <p>3) If you checked "more barriers" above, do you experience this identity as a source of: ___ Strength ___ Stress ___ Both ___ Neither</p> <p>4) How much do you think about this identity? ___ (1=never, 5=very often)</p>	<p>1) Does this identity impact your mood or mental health (how you think, feel, behave)? ___ (1=not at all, 5=completely). If so, in what ways does this identity affect your mental health?</p> <p>2) Does this identity interact with other identities, causing more or less stress? If so, how?</p> <p>3) Considering this aspect of your identity, what is one action you could take going forward to positively influence your treatment/functioning/mood?</p>
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<p>Nationality and Citizenship</p> <p><u>Definition:</u> The place in the world where someone was born and/or legal status where they currently reside</p> <p>◆ How do you identify? _____</p>	<p>1) ___ Historically experienced <u>more privilege</u> or power Examples: US American, Citizen, Documented immigrant</p> <p>or</p> <p>___ Historically experienced <u>more barriers</u> or stigma Examples: Undocumented immigrant, Refugee, Asylum Seeker, International Student, etc.</p> <p>2) ___Visible ___Hidden ___Concealable</p> <p>3) If you checked “more barriers” above, do you experience this identity as a source of: ___ Strength ___Stress ___ Both ___Neither</p> <p>4) How much do you think about this identity? ___ (1=never, 5=very often)</p>	<p>1) Does this identity impact your mood or mental health (how you think, feel, behave)? ___ (1=not at all, 5=completely). If so, in what ways does this identity affect your mental health?</p> <p>2) Does this identity interact with other identities, causing more or less stress? If so, how?</p> <p>3) Considering this aspect of your identity, what is one action you could take going forward to positively influence your treatment/functioning/mood?</p>
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<p>Gender, gender expression, and sex assigned at birth</p> <p><u>Definition:</u> <i>Sex assigned at birth:</i> The sex you were labeled at birth (usually Male or Female) based on physical characteristics and chromosomes. Sometimes people’s current gender identity does not match what they were assigned at birth.</p> <p>◆ How do you identify? _____</p> <p><i>Gender:</i> A range of biological and socially constructed characteristics pertaining to, and typically differentiating between “masculinity” and “femininity.”</p> <p>◆ How do you identify? _____</p>	<p>1a) Sex assigned at birth: <input type="checkbox"/> Historically experienced <u>more privilege</u> or power Examples: Cisgender, when your sex assigned at birth and current gender match <input type="checkbox"/> Historically experienced <u>more barriers</u> or stigma Examples: Transgender, Intersex, or other identities not matching birth assignment, etc.</p> <p>1b) Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Historically experienced <u>more privilege</u> or power Examples: Male <input type="checkbox"/> Historically experienced <u>more barriers</u> or stigma Examples: Female, Gender Queer, Gender Non-Conforming, etc.</p> <p>2) <input type="checkbox"/> Visible <input type="checkbox"/> Hidden <input type="checkbox"/> Concealable</p> <p>3) <input type="checkbox"/> Fluid <input type="checkbox"/> Changing <input type="checkbox"/> Stable</p> <p>4) If you checked “more barriers” above, do you experience this identity as a source of: <input type="checkbox"/> Strength <input type="checkbox"/> Stress <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/> Neither</p> <p>5) How much do you think about this identity? _____ (1=never, 5=very often)</p>	<p>1) Does this identity impact your mood or mental health (how you think, feel, behave)? _____ (1=not at all, 5=completely). If so, in what ways does this identity affect your mental health?</p> <p>2) Does this identity interact with other identities, causing more or less stress? If so, how?</p> <p>3) Considering this aspect of your identity, what is one action you could take going forward to positively influence your treatment/functioning/mood?</p>
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Recommended Citation for this Worksheet

Winer, J.P., Wadsworth, L. P., Forgeard, M., Pinder-Amaker, S., Bjorgvinsson, T., & Beard, C. (2018). Development and implementation of a single-session diversity and multicultural psychology group intervention within an academic psychiatric hospital. *the Behavior Therapist*.

Published References

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Smith, L. C. (2015). Alterity models in counseling: When we talk about diversity, what are we actually talking about? *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 37(3), 248–261. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-015-9241-8>

Wadsworth, L. P., Morgan L. P., Hayes-Skelton, S. A., Roemer, L., & Suyemoto, K. L. (2016). Ways to boost your research rigor through increasing your cultural competence. *The Behavior Therapist*, 39(3), 76-92.