



RDR Glossary: A Snapshot

Ableism/Ablism is a form of discrimination against individuals with physical, mental, or developmental disabilities that is based in the belief that those who do not have disabilities are inherently superior and those that do must be fixed and/or cannot function as full members of society.

Diversity is the presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes, both visible and invisible, within a group, organization or society.

Equity is a condition or a state of fair, inclusive and respectful treatment that recognizes and acknowledges the accommodation of differing needs and expectations. Equity acknowledges the fact that equal treatment does not always yield equal results.

Inclusion is creating an environment where people have both the feeling and reality of belonging and are able to achieve their full potential.

LGBTTIQQ2S: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Intersex, Queer, Questioning, 2 Spirited

Oppression is the systemic and pervasive nature of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness. Oppression fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships and structures that saturate most aspects of life in our society. Oppression denotes structural and material constraints that significantly shape a person's life chances and sense of possibility. Oppression also signifies a hierarchical relationship in which dominant or privilege groups benefit, often in unconscious ways, from the disempowerment of subordinated or targeted groups. It resides not only in external social institutions and norms but also within the human psyche as well.

Power can be defined in three ways: Power over is the dominant form in our society, often associated with violence or the threat of violence. It is the ability to force others to submit to your will, regardless of their wishes; Power-from-within refers to the inner strength associated with courage, conviction, creativity and self-discipline. For some, power-within carries strong spiritual connotations; Power-with is the result when we co-operate with others to achieve shared ends. It comes from our ability to listen to, emphasize with and understand others, and to identify shared beliefs or interests. Power-with is both the key to multiplying our individual strength, and the ultimate goal of reshaping society along fair and just lines.

Privilege is unearned and/or unrecognized power that gives certain groups economic, social and political advantages in society.

Race is a socially constructed concept used to divide humans into categories according to a set of common visible traits such as skin colour, shapes of eyes, nose, face or body type. This biological category was developed based on 18th and 19th century Eurocentric ideology of superiority and was used to exert European dominance through slavery, colonialism and imperialism. While race does not produce racism, racism continues to reinforce the concept of race.

Social Identities are a specific set of categories of difference - gender, ethnicity, race, first language, age, ability status, religion, sexual orientation, class, education - that individuals are born into. They predispose us to unequal roles that are prescribed different powers, duties and role-given goals and interests in society. We are socialized by powerful sources to play the role assigned to us by an inequitable system. Our social location consists of our ascribed social identities, social roles and relationships. An individual's social location is not fixed: it is contextual, relational and situational.