## The Big 10+ Dimensions of Social Identity in the U.S.

Everyone is a mix of both systemically dominant and non-dominant identities. A person’s particular mix of identities will affect their experience of privilege and oppression. Other important categories that shape our identities in addition to those listed below include language, physical appearance, family type, mental health, employment & more.

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|  | **Often Systemically Dominant Group Members…** | **Often Systemically Non-Dominant Group Members…** |
|  | * May be taught that they are “normal” * May be less aware of social privilege and other groups’ feelings, concerns, or experiences * May be socially conscious or socially unaware * May show defensiveness, guilt, doubt, or rationalization (rather than empathy or urgency) towards marginalized folks’ experiences | * May have had history of dealing with negative societal messages, repeatedly * May feel hyper-visible or invisible * May have to work hard to seek out similar others * May be socially conscious or socially unaware * May seek acknowledgment, empathy, and urgency for change (rather than rationalization or guilt) |
| **Age** | Young and middle-aged adults | Elderly people, teenagers, or children |
| **Race and Color** | White people | Black, Brown, Latino/-a/-x, Asian, Pacific Islander, Indigenous, Middle Eastern, & Multiracial people |
| **Ethnicity** | Those of primarily European descent | Those living in the U.S. whose ancestry is descended from places outside of Europe, and Jewish and Romani people of varied ancestral & national origins |
| **Citizenship & National Origin** | **Citizenship**: Legal citizens of and/or born in the country that reside in; Green card holders  **National Origin**: Immigrants from European and predominantly White countries | **Citizenship:** Those who are undocumented in the country they reside in; Immigrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees who have migrated due to political unrest and/or violence  **National Origin:** Immigrants from non-European and non-predominantly White countries; Those from nations not recognized by the U.N. |
| **Faith based perspective & Religion** | Christians, Protestants, Catholics | Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, (those who do not practice Christianity) |
| **Sex & Gender** | **Sex**: Men  **Gender**: Cisgender men and women (cis- means ‘same’. Cisgender people identify with the same gender as the one designated at their birth) | **Sex**: Women, Intersex people  **Gender**: Transgender, non-binary, & genderqueer people (includes those who identify differently than designated at birth and those who don’t identify as either a man or a woman) |
| **Disability** | Those without learning or developmental disabilities; Able-bodied folks | People with disabilities (learning, developmental, emotional, physical, illiteracy) |
| **Sexual Orientation** | Straight people | Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Queer, Pansexual, Asexual, and others who don’t identify as straight |
| **Class, Socio-**  **Economic Status** | Middle-class and wealthy people, people with reliably wealthy social networks | Working class, low-income, chronically poor people, those without reliably wealthy social networks |
| **Education & Intellect** | Formal Education  Highest degree achievement in field | Those that received an alternative or non-formal education that is outside the U.S. formal education system. (includes G.E.D testing and degrees obtain outside of the U.S.) |

## Adapted from the work of Diane Goodman and Dr. Debra Jenkins