

A Journey on Becoming a Change Agent in Academia

Leaning Into Our Discomfort
and Withdrawing Our
Commitment from
Oppressive Spaces

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Ancestry meditation (grounded in support)



Share

- Name and pronouns
- Who was the person?
- Gesture/movement or sound-how do they support you?

The Power Machine

- Instructions:

Bring to mind a movement or sound that represents how power manifests/shows up in your life .

Pair share

- What did you notice about yourself in this exercise?
- What was challenging for you?
- Did anything come easy? What?
- Any observations/awareness of those around you?

Manifestations of power

**Power
within**

**Power
with**

**Power
over**

What is oppression? (POWER OVER)

Unequal distribution of power. The combination of **prejudice plus power** creates a system of **advantage** that benefits some groups (often called the “**dominant groups**”) and discriminates against other groups (often called the “target groups”)

This system of advantage enables dominant groups to exert control over target groups by limiting their **rights, freedom and access to necessary resources.**

Cuesta, G., 2017

Target vs. non-target groups

Privilege and oppression overlaps, depending on your multiple identities

<u>Type of oppression</u>	<u>Target Group</u>	<u>Non - Target Group</u>
• Racial	People of Color	White People
• Class	Poor; working class	Middle, Upper Class
• Gender	Transgender; Woman	Men
• Sexual Orientation	Lesbian, gay, bisexual	Heterosexual
• Ability	People with disabilities	People w/o disabilities
• Religion	Non-Christian	Christian
• Age	Older adults	Young people
• Youth	Children & Young Adults	Older adults
• Rank/status	People w/o college degree	People w/ degree
• Immigration Status	Undocumented/immigrant	U.S-born
• Language	Non-English	English



What is oppression?
(POWER OVER)

- How do we disempower others (our students, colleagues?)



Think about a time at your institution that when you were witness to a “power over” (oppressive) incident.

- Now holding this vision in your mind – think about a time when :
- 1) you said /did something
- 2) said / did nothing

Drawing reflection : draw two bodies- with space in the center of the body to jot down the following:

The body which represents the time when you did /said something

- What are the feelings/ thoughts associated? How does it feel in your body?

- I am.....

- I feel...

The body that represents the time you did not do/say something

- What are the feelings /thoughts associated? How does it feel in your body?

- I am....

- I feel....



Questions to Reflect On?

- What do you notice ?
- In what ways have you internalized superiority or inferiority?
- What are the connections between how you feel and how you act?



Removing Ourselves from Oppressive Spaces requires:

- Examining the ways in which we embody power (Power within, power with, power over)
- Taking notice of how one internalizes /perpetuates oppression
- Introducing practices that move your insight into action and that support our own power to transform

Practices

Create A Mantra:

- I AM _____
- Pro-tip: should invoke something you would like to elicit or embody (look at your figure of how you felt when you did /said something)

Create a Sound or Movement

- Create a sound or movement that embodies what your mantra represents