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Equity and Mental Health on Postsecondary Campuses

CMHA Ontario

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Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario

About the Canadian Mental Health Association

CMHA stats at a glance



CMHA has **30** branches across Ontario



CMHA branches employ more than **3,900** people



CMHAs belong to a community-based sector that serves approx. **500,000** clients a year

What is community mental health and addictions?

“ Canadian Mental Health Association branches provide wide-ranging wraparound services to meet the needs of individuals in our community living with mental health or addictions challenges.

Wraparound means we offer our clients services and programs that help them in various aspects of their life so that they can live in and contribute positively to the community. ”

What are some examples of wraparound services?



Housing



Employment Aid



Court Diversion



Clubhouses



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Agenda

Defining key terms:

Equity

Mental Health

Social Determinants of Health

Intersections

Influences on student mental health

Implementation of measures at different levels

CICMH Toolkit



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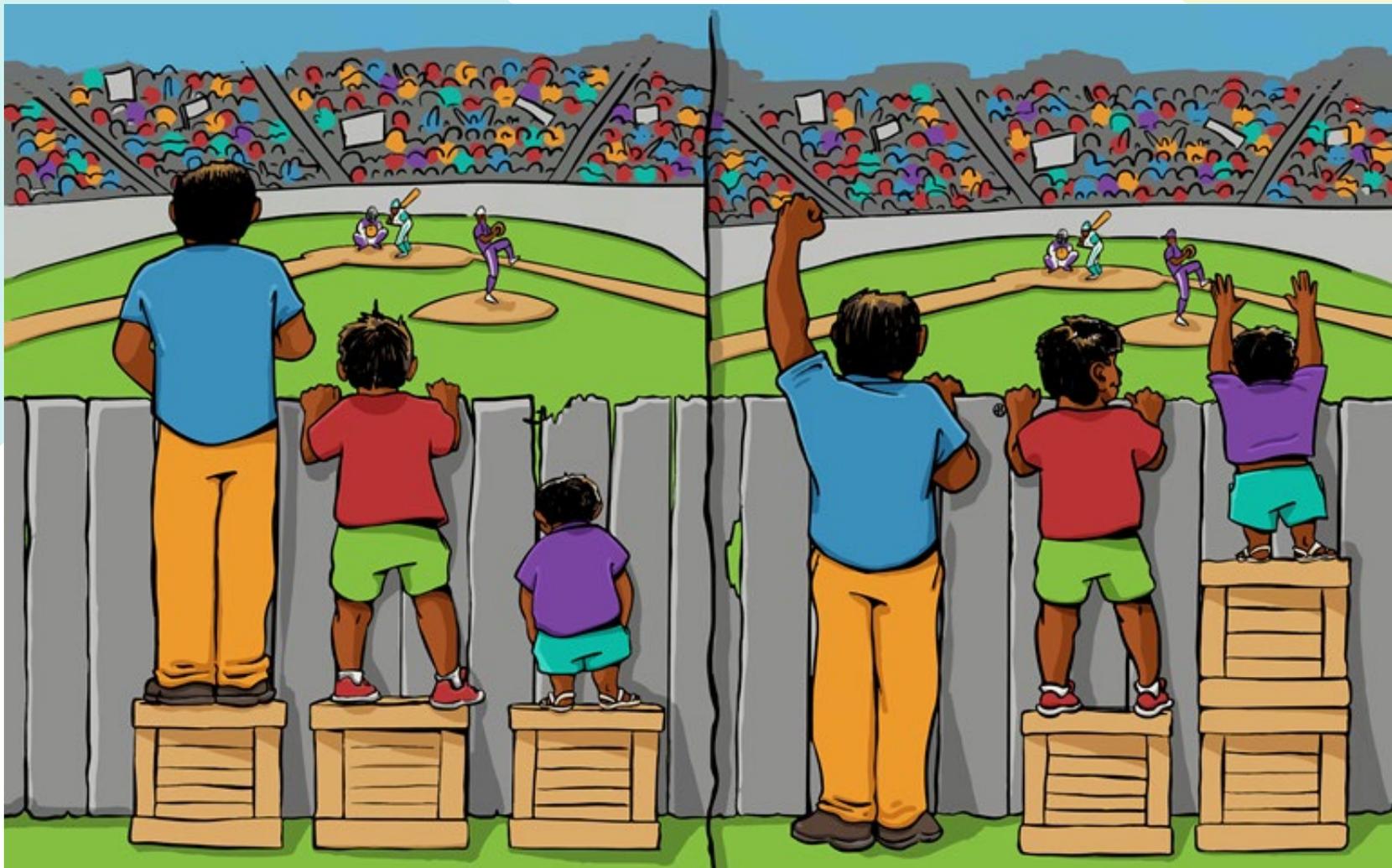
Defining key terms

Equity is a way to address marginalization. In contrast to equality, which seeks the same treatment for all individuals, an equity-based approach recognizes that different actions are required to achieve similar outcomes for different individuals or groups due to the uneven distribution of power, wealth and other resources in society



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Defining key terms

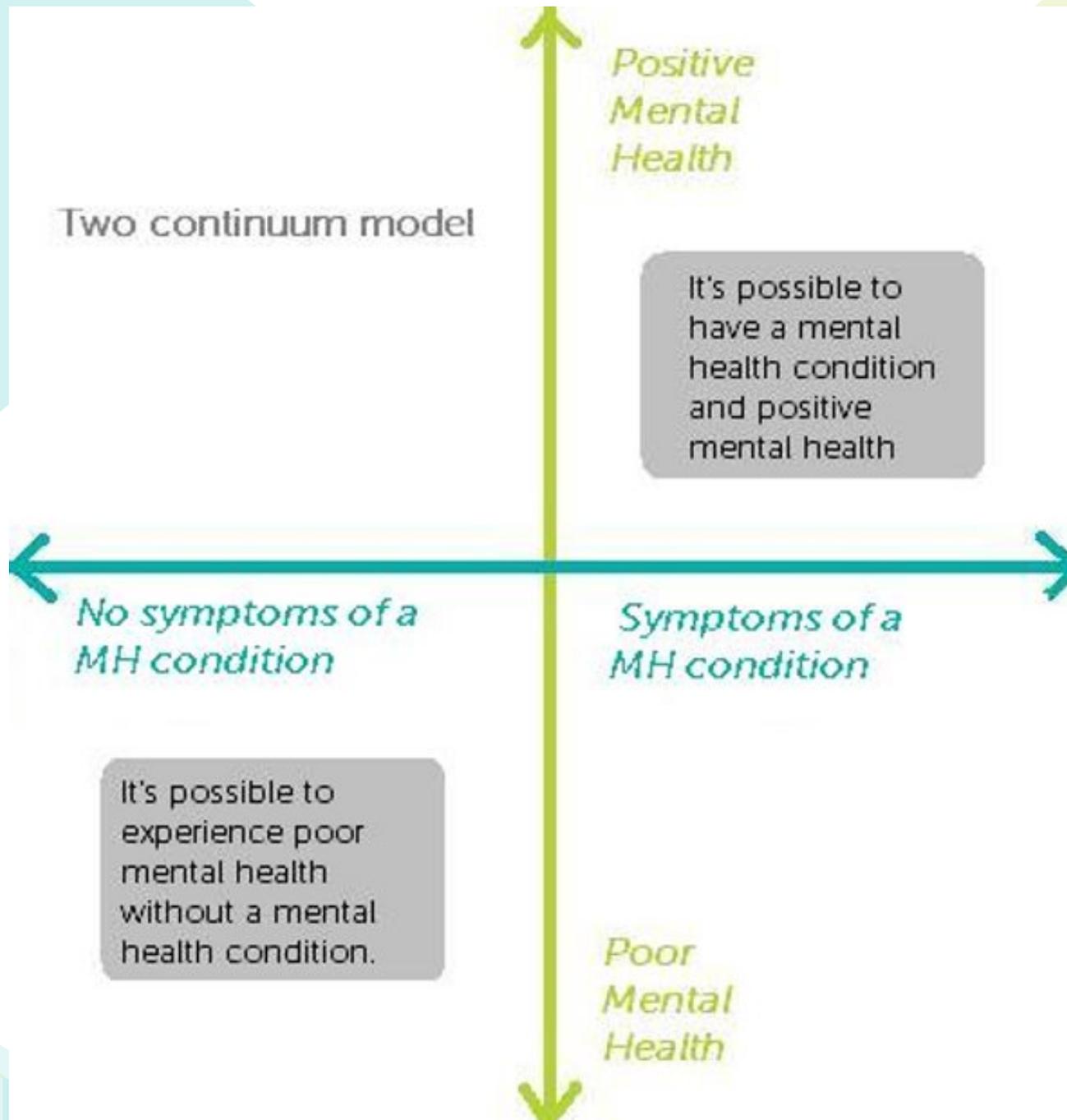
Mental Health is the capacity of each and all of us to feel, think, and act in ways that enhance our ability to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face. It is a positive sense of emotional and spiritual well-being that respects the importance of culture, equity, social justice, interconnections and personal dignity.



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Two continuum model



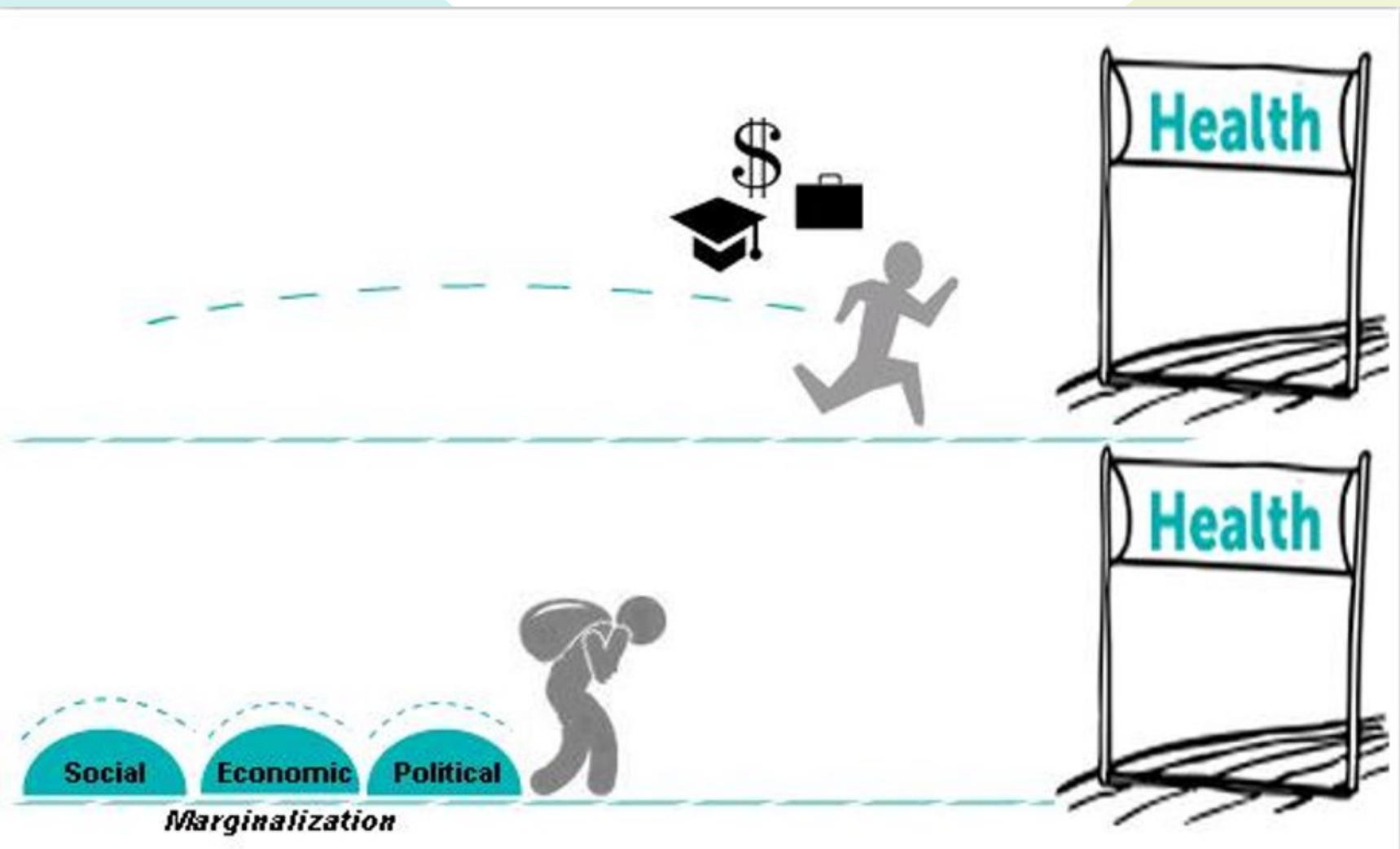
Defining key terms

Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the living conditions that shape the health of individuals. The SDOH include Aboriginal status, disability, early life, education, employment and working conditions, food insecurity, health services, gender, housing, income and income distribution, race, social exclusion, social safety net, unemployment and job security.



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Intersections



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Examples

What are some examples of population groups that have been affected by some or all of these determinants?

**Discrimination
& violence**

Social exclusion

**Lack of access
to economic
resources**



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Student mental health

Influenced by several factors:

How we understand our own identity;

How we perceive other identities;

The actions we choose to take;

The lens through which we understand other people's actions;

The programs we work in;

The programs we develop;

Our efforts to advocate for change;

The change we are advocating for;

.....and the list goes on.



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Use of self

Self-reflection requires us to critically consider our role within the context of moral, political, and ethical issues.



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Use of self

Self-reflection requires us to learn about our own culture and our own biases, and leads to **cultural humility**:

listening without judgment and being open to learning from and about others.

Self reflection is the building block to cultural humility, and underpins the creation of **cultural safety**: *the experience of safety by those receiving the service.*



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Use of self



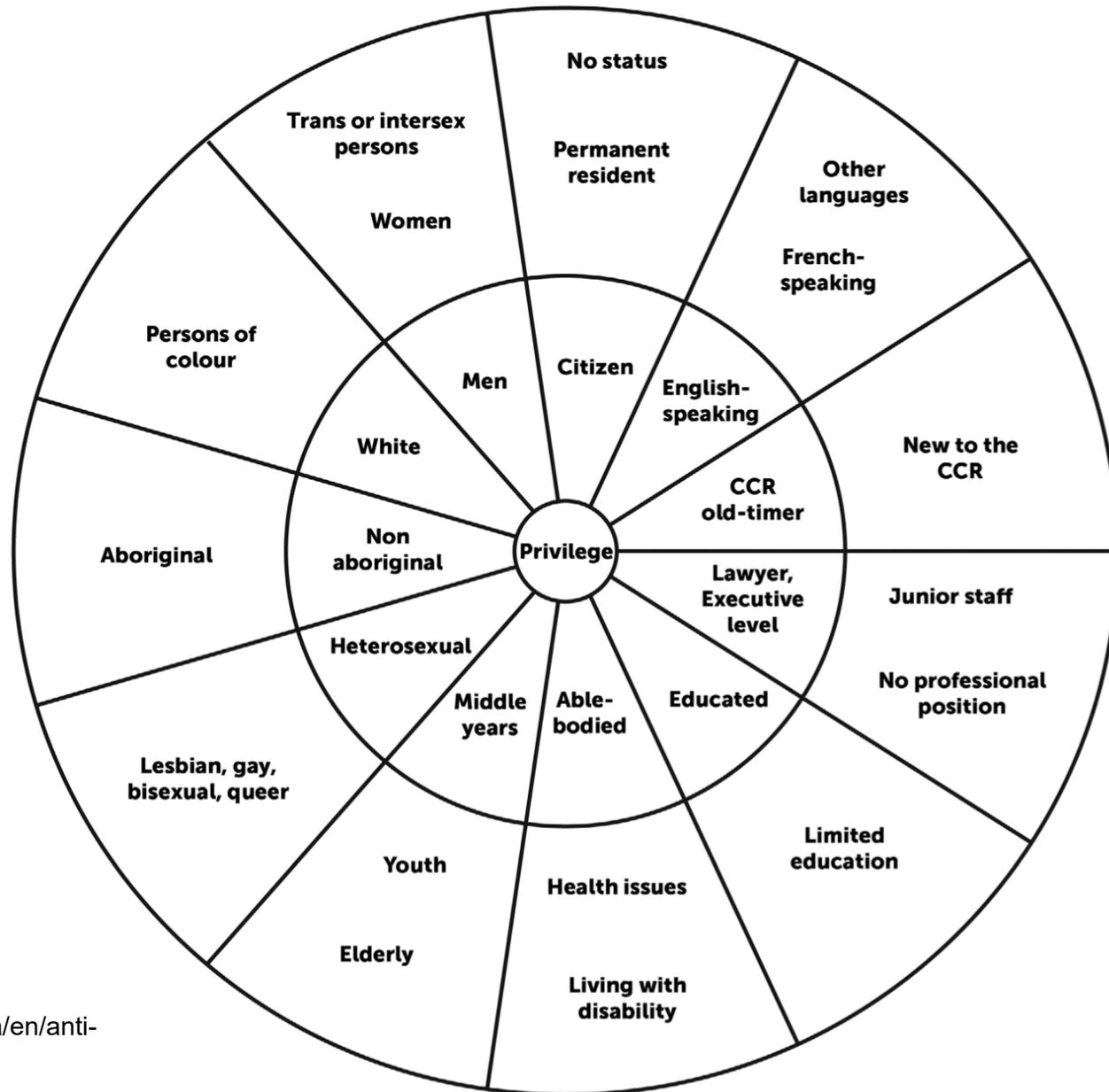
Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkxcuhdglwY>



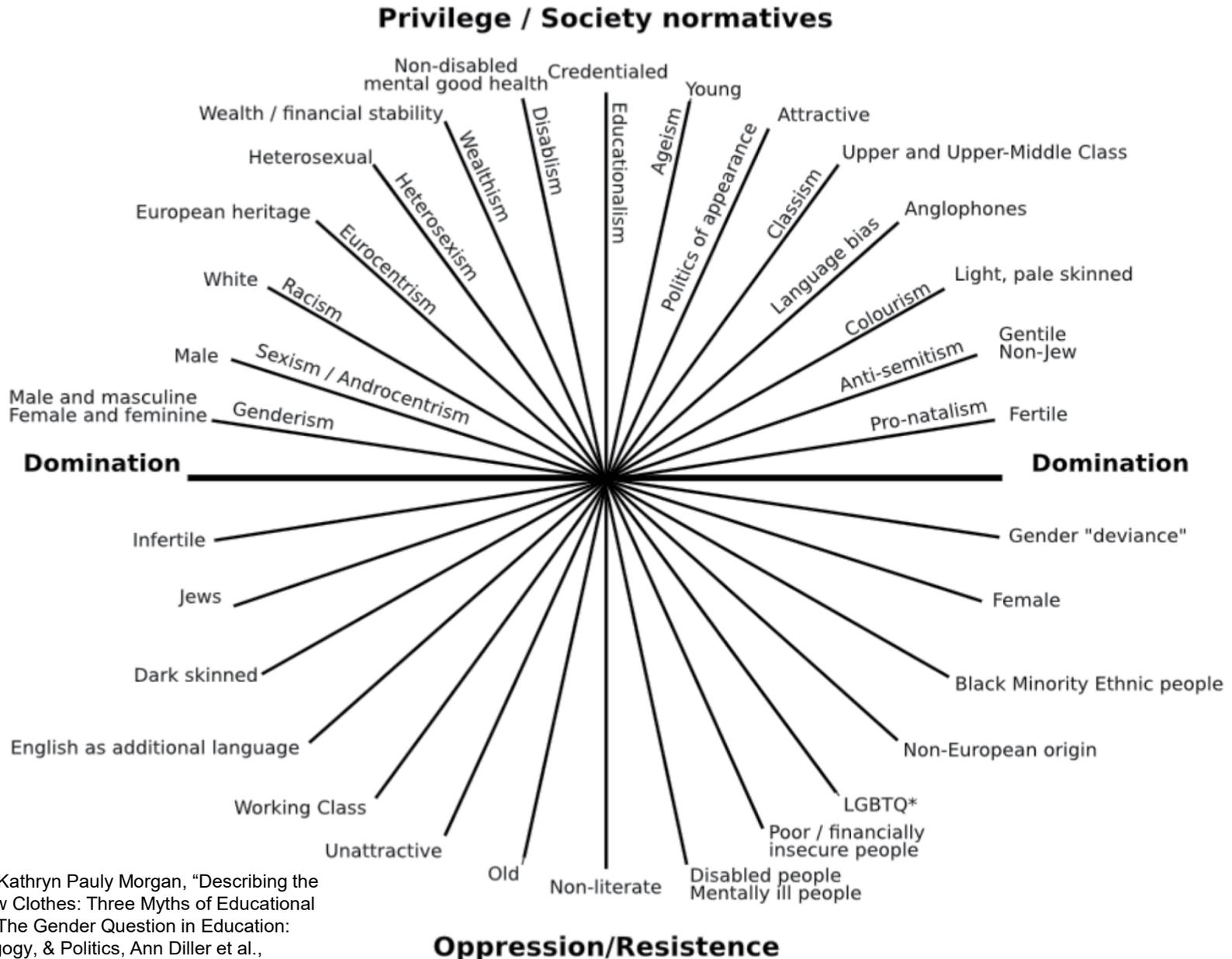
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Use of self



Use of self



Adapted from Kathryn Pauly Morgan, "Describing the Emperor's New Clothes: Three Myths of Educational (In) Equality." *The Gender Question in Education: Theory, Pedagogy, & Politics*, Ann Diller et al., Boulder CO: Westview, 1996

Questions to consider:

- What steps are taken to ensure that you, and others with your identity, are represented and heard in your team, the program, and the larger organization?
- Whose identity is underrepresented, and whose voices are not heard? What steps can you take to amplify those voices?
- Think about meetings where you are a participant: What efforts are taken to ensure the meeting is accessible, equitable, and representative? How are decisions made?
- What is your level of knowledge and comfort with the history of people from groups that have and continue to experience marginalization?
- What steps can you take to increase your own awareness, and how can this information support you during everyday life?



Individual level interactions

How can we support students in feeling safe from experiences of discrimination and violence?

- ***Language***
- ***Spaces***

How can we support students in feeling socially included?

- ***Platforms for connecting***
- ***Allyship***

How can we support students in accessing economic resources?

- ***Diversifying options***
- ***Naming and asking***



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How do I talk about Substance Use?

Stigma is a significant barrier to talking openly about substance use and can prevent people from accessing support or treatment. The language used is an important factor in reducing stigma and breaking down the negative stereotypes associated with Substance Use Disorders. By using non-stigmatizing language, those who are experiencing challenges may experience fewer barriers to accessing supports.

Using neutral and medically accurate terminology when describing substance use and **'people first'** language that focuses on the individual is advised.



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Instead of	Try
Drug User	Person who uses drugs
Drug Abuser / Addict	Person who uses drugs problematically / Person with a Substance Use Disorder
Drug Habit	Regular substance use
Addicted to '...'	Has a '...' substance use disorder
Former / Ex-Addict	Person in recovery
Suffering from an addiction	Person living with an addiction
Stayed sober / clean	Maintained recovery
Drug Offender	Person arrested for a drug violation
Non-compliant	Chooses not to at this point

Adapted from Health Canada (2018)

Source: <http://ontario.cmha.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/How-do-I-talk-about-Substance-Use-2018-Poster-1.pdf>



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INDIGENOUS ALLY TOOLKIT

THE ALLY'S TOOLKIT

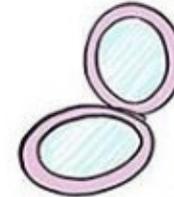
HAVE PATIENCE



BE WILLING TO LEARN
(ON YOUR OWN!)



CONFRONT YOUR OWN BIASES



CORRECT YOUR MISTAKES



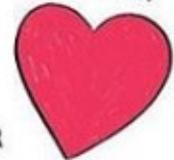
LISTEN MORE THAN YOU TALK



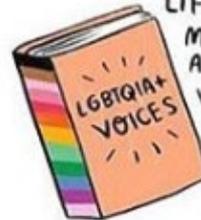
SPEAK UP TO STRAIGHT/CIS FRIENDS and FAMILY



KEEP AN OPEN-MINDED HEART



LIFT UP MARGINALIZED VOICES



CHECK YOUR PRIVILEGE



Tyler Feder

Source: http://reseaumtlnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Ally_March.pdf



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Program level interactions

How can a program promote feelings of safety from discrimination and violence?

- ***Transition programs***
- ***Student centres***

How can a program support social inclusion?

- ***Peer support/mentorship programs***
- ***Classroom settings***

How can a program promote access to economic resources?

- ***Housing options***
- ***Promotion of opportunities***



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Program level interactions

Health Equity Impact Assessment



Policy level interactions

How can a policy enhance student safety on campus?

- ***Underlying principles***
- ***Promotion & implementation***

How can a policy promote social inclusion?

- ***Signage***
- ***Curriculum enhancements***

How can a policy create access to economic resources?

- ***Recruitment methods***
- ***Job opportunities***



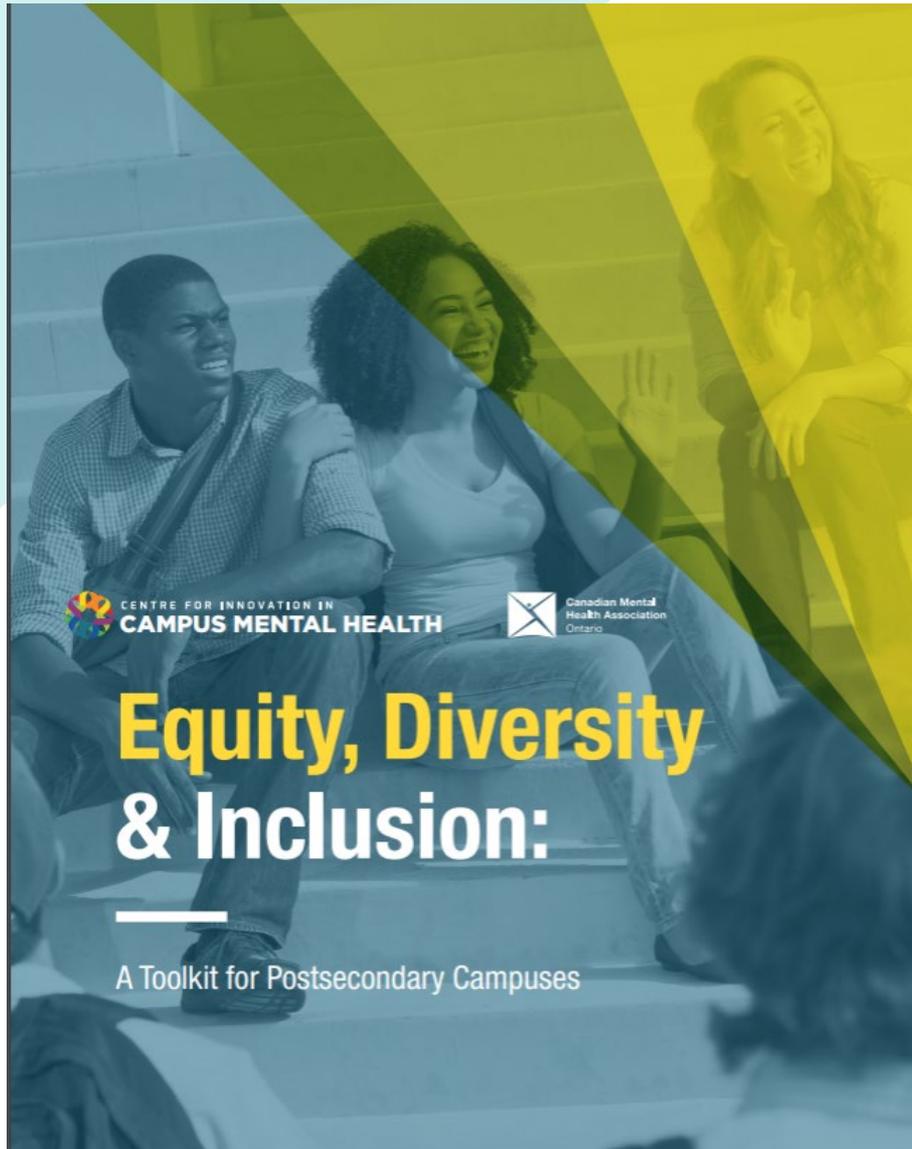
What is missing in this image?



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Questions?

Contact Sana Imran (*Policy Analyst, Lead on Health Equity*) at:

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