

Daily Effects of White Privilege

This is an exercise to bring out awareness of privilege in terms of race, class, sexual orientation, physical ability and gender. It's not aimed at instilling guilt, rather at questioning prevalent assumptions that everyone has equal opportunity, and that all achievement occurs on a level playing field. Individuals do not cause systems of discrimination, but they are responsible for how they respond to it and their own privilege.

- √ My ancestors were forced to come to this country, or forced to relocate from where they were living, or restricted from living in certain areas
- √ I can if I wish arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
- √ If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure that my neighbors will be neutral or pleasant to me.
- √ I can go shopping alone most of the time, assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
- √ I can turn on the television, open to the front page of the paper, or go to the movies, and see people of my race widely represented in a positive fashion.
- √ When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization" I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
- √ Whether I use checks or credit cards, my skin color will probably not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
- √ I can swear, dress in second hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race.
- √ I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of color who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.
- √ I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to "the person in charge," I will be facing a person of my race.
- √ I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having coworkers suspect that I got it because of race.
- √ I don't have to think about sexism, racism, classism, heterosexism, and ableism every day. I can decide when and where you deal with it.

Adapted from "The Invisible Knapsack" by Peggy McIntosh