Working Within Diversity:
An anti-oppressive practice which brings identity, faith and spirituality more into our therapeutic and supervision practice

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Moving from oppressive to anti-oppressive practice is to move from working ‘with’ diversity to working within diversity.
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- supports an understanding of how each person is shaped by their lived experiences & by the underlying systemic and structural context of their lived experiences and which end of systems of oppression and power-oppression relational dynamics they experience.
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- identifies the ‘out there’ context within which practitioners/clients have their lived experiences of privilege and/or oppression.
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• identifies the ‘out there’ context within which practitioners/clients have their lived experiences of privilege and/or oppression.

• acknowledges the structural inequalities of the ‘in here’ context and working to flatten the power and oppression between counsellor-client, tutor-student or supervisor-supervisee, offering a process and relationship, which holds the client/student/supervisee in equal regard to the practitioner/tutor, without the client/student/supervisee being marginalised, minoritised or ‘othered’ by the service/institution or practitioner/tutor.

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What is ‘Working within Diversity’?
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In Therapeutic Relationship

Counsellor

Client
What is ‘Working within Diversity’?

Counsellor
• Identity

In
Therapeutic Relationship

Client
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What is ‘Working within Diversity’?

DIVERSITY

Counsellor
- Identity

In
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Client
- Identity

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Working Within Diversity
The 5-component Anti-Oppressive Model

(1) Structural and Systemic Context of Counselling

DIVERSITY

(2) Counsellor
- Identity and intersectionality

(3) Power
(4) Therapeutic Relationship
(5) Therapeutic Process

(2) Client
- Identity and intersectionality

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Working Within Diversity
The 5-component Anti-Oppressive Model

7 Principles:
1. Anti-oppressive not inclusive
2. Systemic, structural and social inequalities and oppressions
3. Two identities
4. Two truths
5. Two identities in the therapeutic relationship
6. Culturally attuned
7. Re-establishing external context

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Identity wheel
Identity and Social Location
Identity located in systems of oppression

Power
- Privilege
- Supremacy
- Abundance
- Benefits
- Normative
- Dominant

Powerless
- Oppression
- Lack of autonomy
- Lack of opportunity
- Benefits not afforded / Barriers
- Other / othering
- Minority
Systems
Of
Oppression

- Power
- Powerless

- Age
- Gender
- Racialised Identity
- Ethnicity
- Ability / disability
- Faith (including visible symbol of faith / religion)
- Sexuality
- Class
Religion, Faith, Beliefs, Spirituality & Identity

- Definitions

**Faith:** a defined or strong belief in a religion or belief system

**Religion:** a recognised belief system of faith, which includes the belief in a higher power, God or gods, and worship through prayer, religious practices or rituals

**Belief system:** a set of principles, values and beliefs which form a moral and ethical code and worldview

**Spirituality:** a belief beyond the self and a connection between the self and others, the world and other realms, which can be reflected through spiritual practices.
Religion, Faith, Beliefs, Spirituality & Identity

- Worldview
- Position in life
- Construction of self and identity
- Client’s frame of reference
Tool: Faith, beliefs and spirituality assessment questions

• What gives you hope? What keeps you going in life?
• Is there a faith, religion, spiritual practice or belief system that you identify with?
• Do you have any faith, religion, spiritual practice or beliefs which are important to you?
• How does this support you? How is this part of your self-care practice?
• Does your spiritual or faith practice make you feel uneasy about any aspect of this counselling practice or process?
• How does your spirituality affect you? Does it make you feel loved/accepted/belonging or isolated/alone, and so on?
• What support do you get from your faith, religious or spiritual identity community?
The process emerges because of the two people in the room – who they are and how they relate to one another – which is all influenced by their own identity and lived experiences, contained within a social and political context.
Anti-Oppressive Supervision Group
Starting January 2024!

Are you a Therapist/Counsellor looking for anti-oppressive & culturally-sensitive supervision?

Join my brand-new supervision group!
Group 1: Monday 10am-12pm (1 space left!)
Group 2: Wednesday 6pm-9pm (2 spaces left!)

Monthly sessions (Jan-June 2024). Block of 6 sessions.
Max 4 people per group.
£270 per person.

Supervision based upon the Working Within Diversity model of anti-oppressive practice & supervision.

Email to book:
myira@myirakhancounselling.co.uk