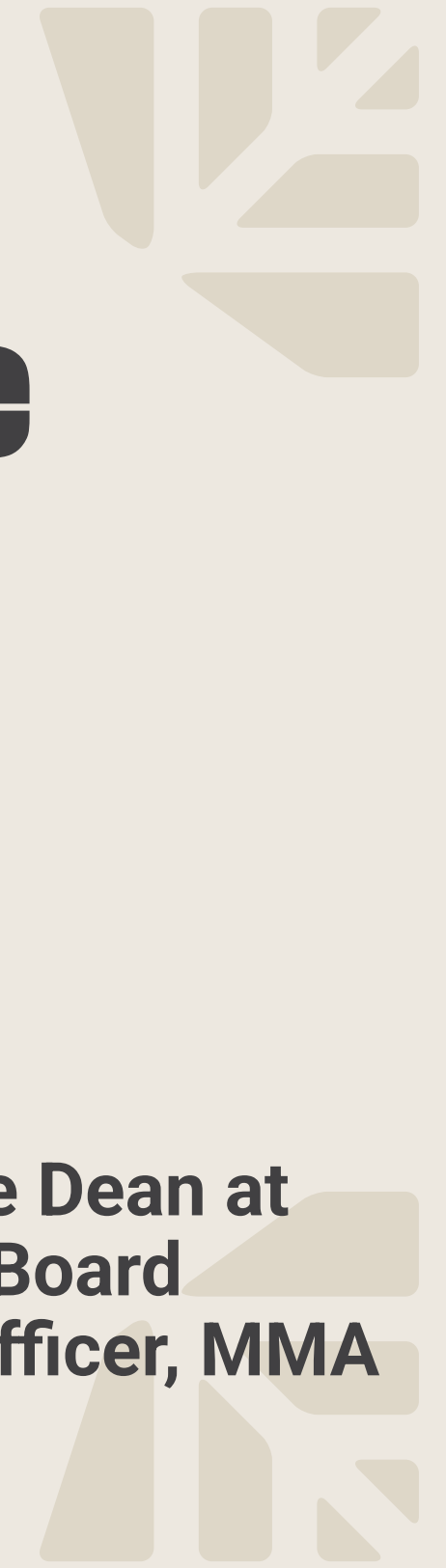


**CONNECT**



**MMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2025**



# **Deepening DEI Knowledge by Exploring Self-Awareness**

**Kiana Pierre-Louis (she/her) - Associate Dean at  
Northeastern University, Sharon Select Board  
Jillian Harvey (she/her) - Chief Equity Officer, MMA**

# Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the City of Boston is located on the unceded ancestral lands of the Massachusetts and Pawtucket Tribes.

We pay our respects to the ancestral bloodlines of these historic tribes and their descendants who still inhabit these historic territories today.

# What to expect during this session:

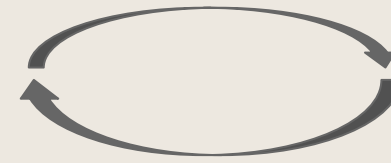
- Building Shared Language
- Exploring the Self and the Cycle of Socialization
- Understanding Identity, Power, Privilege and Bias
- Navigating Challenging Times

# Touchstones

- Be present, presume welcome and extend welcome
- Listen deeply
- Believe that it's possible to emerge refreshed, surprised and less burdened
- No fixing, no saving, no advising, and no setting each other straight
- Always by invitation
- Speak for yourself and speak your truth in ways that respect others' truths
- Suspend judgment
- Listen to the silence
- Maintain confidentiality
- Expect and accept a lack of closure
- When things get difficult, turn to wonder

# Building Shared Language

Sense of Loss INCREASES as you move closer to creating equitable culture



**Diversity** is the representation. Diversity can be measured through numbers and is usually tracked by race, gender, sexual identity, age, ability level, cognitive learning differences, education, economic background.

You've been asked to the party.

**Belonging** is the ongoing culture created to have all people feel welcome across difference. Manifested in the relationships, in conversations, physical space and written word.

You feel welcomed and comfortable going to the party.

**Inclusion** is the participation. Inclusion is usually achieved when diverse populations are involved in decision-making that impacts the policies and practices of the organization.

You've been asked to help plan the party.

**Equity** requires changing structures of power & privilege so disparities of historically under-represented groups are eliminated and therefore outcomes cannot be predicted by that grouping.

Redefines what the party entails, who has the power to plan the party and if there should be a party.

# Building Shared Language

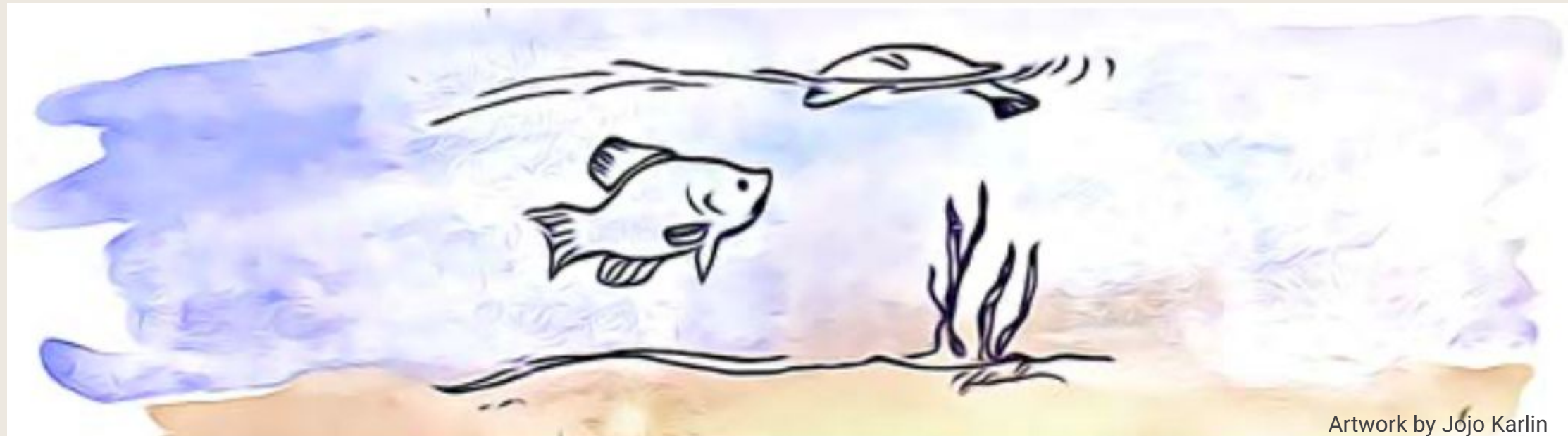
**What is culture?**

**What is identity?**



# The Water We Swim In

Two young fish are swimming along. An older fish swims by and says, “Good morning - how’s the water today?”

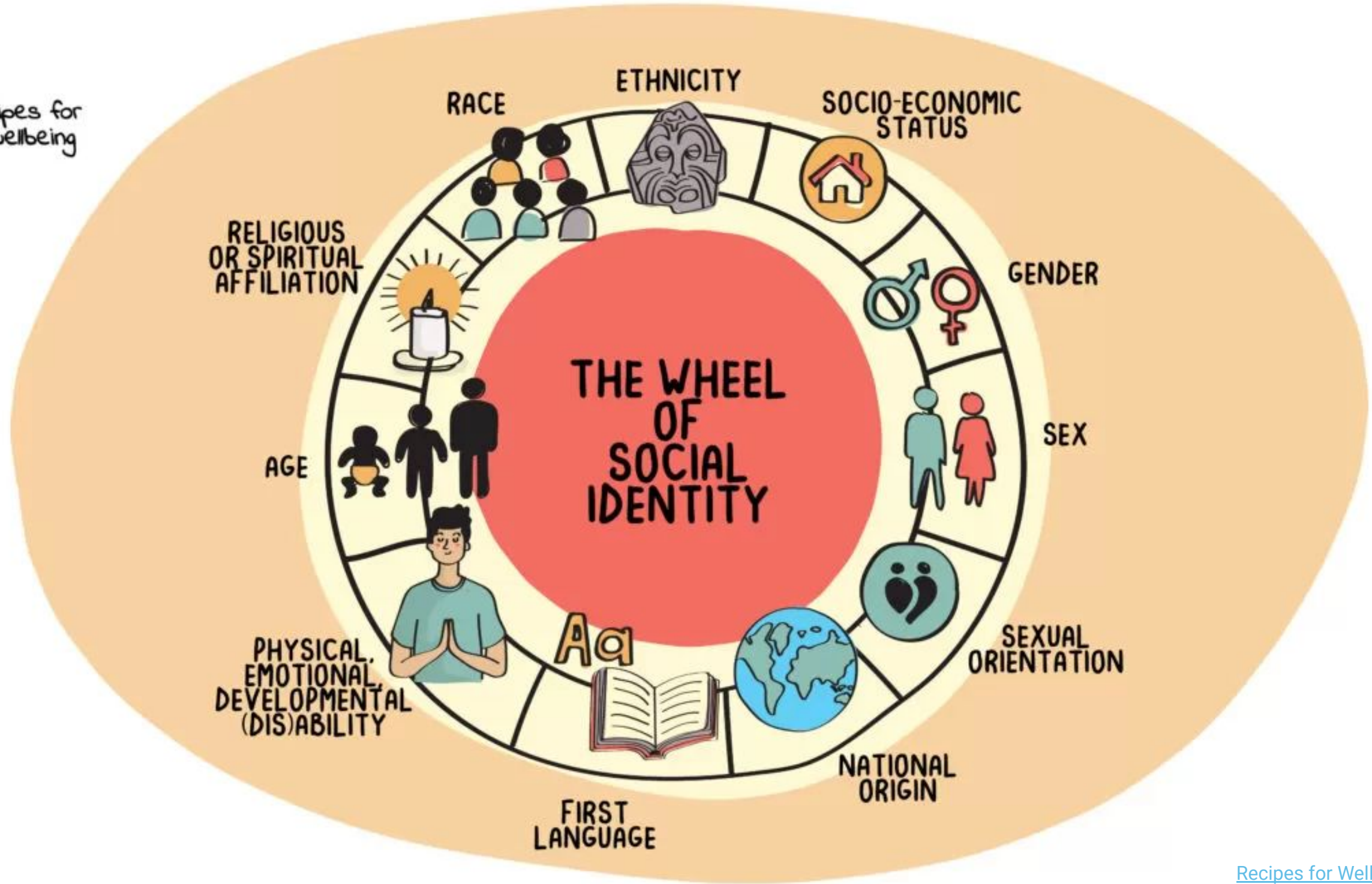


Artwork by Jojo Karlin

The two young fish swim on for a bit, and eventually one of them looks over at the other and says, “What the hell is water?”



Recipes for wellbeing

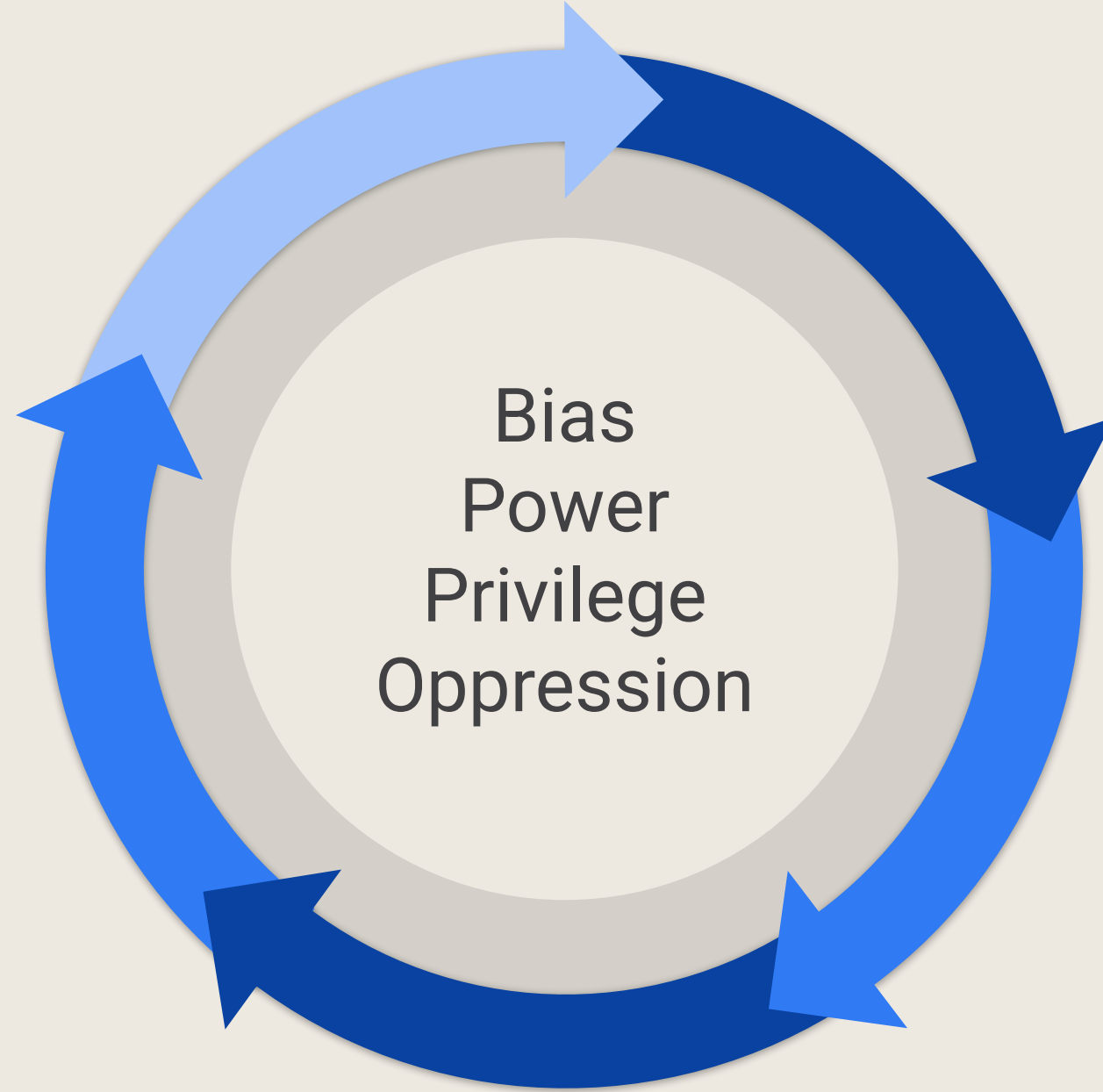


# Understanding the Cycle of Socialization



Adapted from Bobbie Harro, 1982

# Impacts of the Cycle



# Reflection Questions

1. What factors shape your identity?

1. What parts of your identity do you choose for yourself?

1. What parts of your identity are determined for you by other people or by society?

# Diving Deeper into Power & Privilege

- Privilege *is interconnected* with power in our society i.e. those who have privilege have the ability to create/maintain societal norms, often to their benefit at the expense of others etc.
- Privilege *does not* mean that a person has not experienced struggles or that their life has not been difficult.
- Privilege *does not* mean that you did not work hard for the things you have.
- Privilege *is fluid*; it can change as you move through life.
- Privilege *is contextual*; identities you hold can give you an advantage or a disadvantage based on how people perceive you.
- Privilege *has strategically been set-up* as a "taboo" subject, allowing those in dominant groups to ignore embedded, and often invisible, forms of oppression.



# Breaking Down the Cycle...

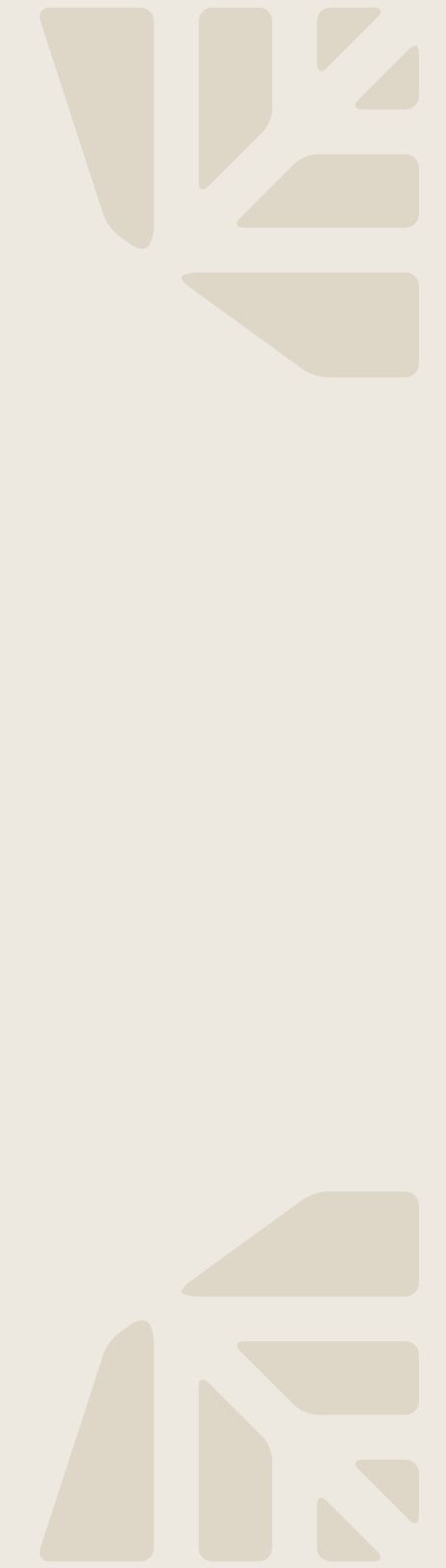
# CYCLE OF LIBERATION

*Cycle of Liberation developed by Bobbie Harro*



# Tools for Navigating Challenging Times

- Assume positive intent
- Check and challenge our own biases
- Effectively communicate
  - Identify barriers
  - Listen deeply and listen to understand
  - Withhold judgment
  - Be curious- ask questions
- Sit with discomfort
- Lean into honesty, openness and vulnerability
- Expect and accept the lack of closure



# THANK YOU!

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Jillian Harvey, [jharvey@mma.org](mailto:jharvey@mma.org)



# Resources

- Bobbie Harro: [The Cycle of Socialization](#), [The Cycle of Liberation](#)
- TedTalk- Verna Myers- [How to overcome our biases?](#)
- [Power, Privilege and Oppression](#)
- [Harvard Implicit Bias Test](#)
- Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People, Book by Anthony Greenwald and Mahzarin Banaji
- TedTalk- Brene Brown- [The Power of Vulnerability](#)