Herefordshire Board Gamers

Here for Games Knowledge

Allyship and privilege

Herefordshire Board Gamers
April 2024

www.herefor.games @herefordbgamers

Why

- Everyone deserves a space they can feel safe and belong.
- We want our sessions to be inclusive, welcoming and fun for all.
- We may make assumptions and may not realise the impact of what we say or do may have on others
- This guide gives some small actions we can all make which could make a dramatic improvement to some other people's enjoyment

We started Herefordshire Board Gamers to be an inclusive space for all and we can do better, this is why this we are taking active steps to raise awareness and address the issue.

Important

- This is a massive, complex and incredibly important topic.
- It is nuanced and there isn’t one right answer
- It is about learning, improving and doing our best with the right intentions.
- This is a very high level introduction and we encourage you read around the topic or discuss it with us

What do we mean by Allyship

- Allyship is demonstrated when someone uses **their own position to speak up or take actions that contribute to improving the circumstances of others.**

- Allyship is a **verb**: it requires ongoing listening and learning.

Roles allies can play

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SPONSOR

Openly endorses someone without them being present

CHAMPION

Acts in a similar way to a Sponsor but does this is in a public forum wanting to send meaningful messages to audiences.

CONFIDANT

Creates a safe space for members of underrepresented groups to express their fears, frustrations and needs.

SCHOLAR

Seeks to learn as much as possible about the challenges and prejudices faced by underrepresented groups.

ADVOCATE

Uses their power and influence to bring peers from underrepresented groups in.

AMPLIFIER

Works to make sure a wide range of voices are heard and respected.

UPSTANDER

Sees wrongdoing and commits to act to combat it. They are the opposite of a bystander.

Privilege

- Not about wealth or luxury
- An unearned advantage
- Not about what you have, but what others don't
- Shifts and changes
- Can be useful

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Take a moment to reflect on your privilege

Which privileges apply to you?

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English is your first language	You have the same gender identity as assigned at birth	You do not have any disabilities, visible or otherwise	You do not have any caring responsibilities for others	People do not ask to touch your hair
You can actively contribute in group conversations	You are comfortable speaking openly about your significant other	You do not have to think twice about which toilet to use	You feel safe at large public events	You feel comfortable calling the police
You do not experience microaggressions	You get paid time off for your religious holidays	You say things like “I don’t see colour”	You do not get assigned a shorter or easier to pronounce name	You have never been made to feel or been called a diversity hire

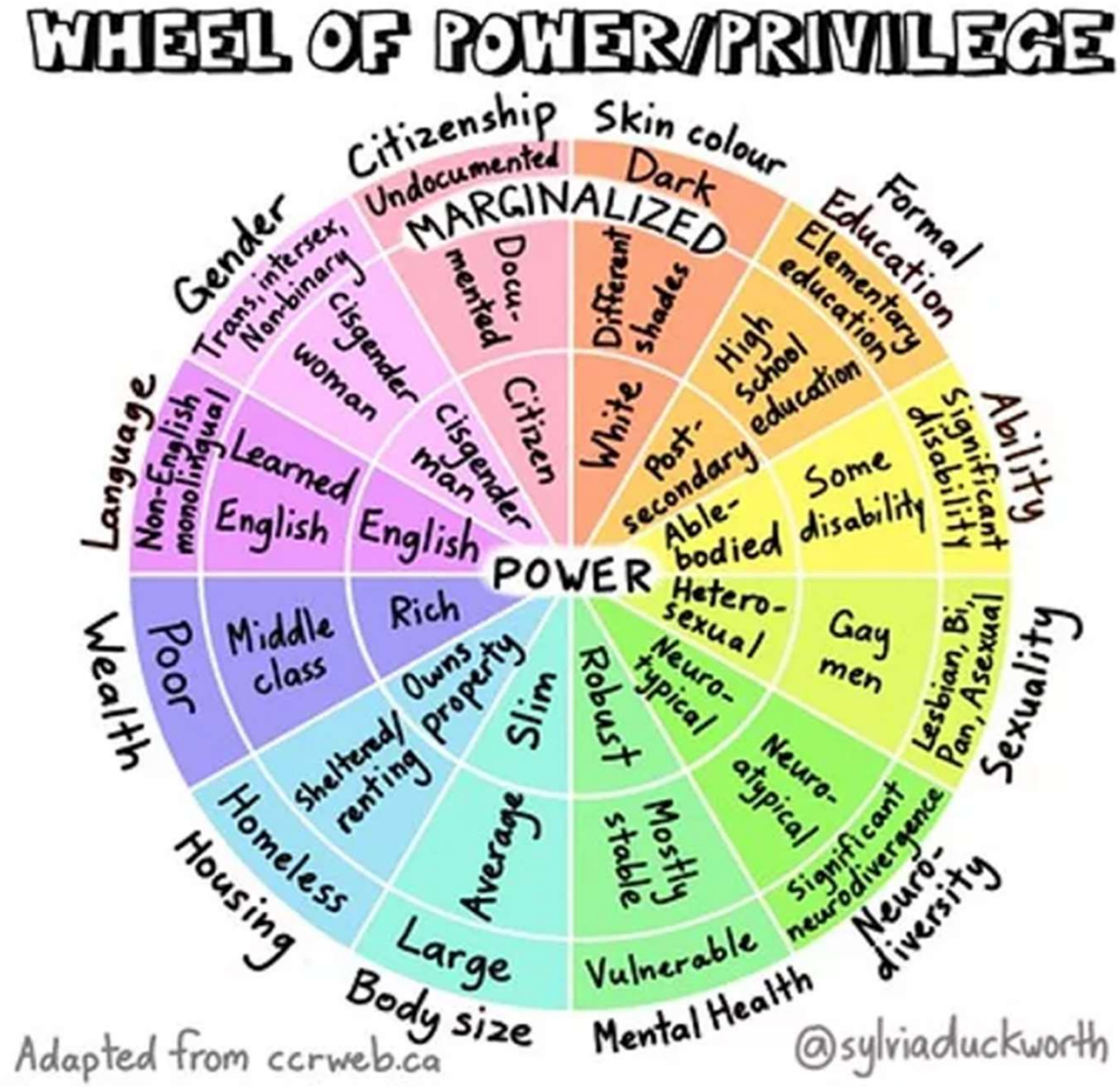
Power and Privilege

The Journey

- Self reflection
- Accountability
- Action

Self Reflection

Reflect on situations or scenarios you find yourself in, where would your social identity be on the wheel?



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Gaming, inclusivity and diversity

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Gaming is great and really should be for everyone but
in reality the hobby isn't as diverse and inclusive as it could be.

Even large game events and conventions are very white male biased.

Privilege Check:

How would you feel if you walked into a game night and it was all white, male and apparently able-bodied?

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Action: Moving from NOT to ANTI

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Not

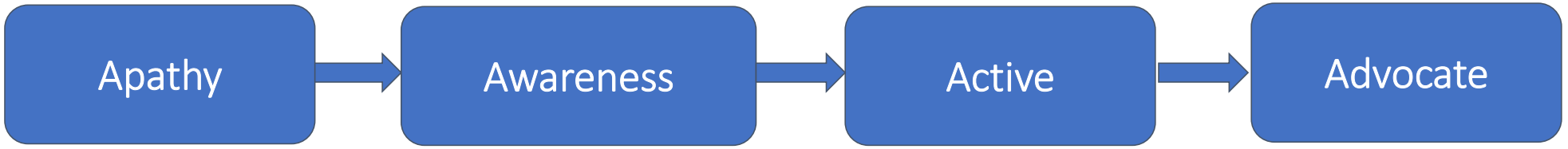
- Passive
- Non-confrontational
- Denial
- Tool of Oppression

vs

Anti

- Active
- Challenges
- Accountability
- Dismantles Oppression

The Allyship Continuum



Barriers to Speaking Up

- Fear of being called over reacting or too sensitive
- Fear of damaging relationships
- Fear of becoming othered
- Fear of conflict
- The cost of silence is unclear
- Will anything change?

Calling out

Will likely feel hard and sometimes uncomfortable, but necessary

- When we need to let someone know that their words or actions are unacceptable and will not be tolerated
- When we need to interrupt in order to prevent further harm
- Allows us to hit the “pause” button and break the momentum

Examples

- “You may not realise, but that word is harmful please be mindful with the language you use”
- “I find that inappropriate and your comments may have made others uncomfortable.”
- “That’s not our culture here, those aren’t our values”

Calling in

- When there is an opportunity to explore deeper, make meaning together, and find a mutual sense of understanding across difference
- When we are seeking to understand or learn more
- Provides for multiple perspectives and encourages paradigm shifts
- Focused on reflection, not reaction

Examples

- “I’m curious, what was your intention when you said that?”
- “How might someone else see this differently? Is it possible that someone might misinterpret your words/actions?”
- “What assumptions do you think might be made here that we need to explore”

Allyship
What we will do and invite you to join us*

- Move from passive to positive action
- Call out / call in when appropriate
- Enforce our code of conduct
- Not be defensive and learn from our mistakes
- Listen and improve ourselves

* we have your back and will support you

Further reading

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https://www.polygon.com/2014/4/23/5640678/playing-with-privilege-the-invisible-benefits-of-gaming-while-male

https://whatever.scalzi.com/2022/05/18/straight-white-male-the-lowest-difficulty-setting-ten-years-on/

https://dontbethatguy.org/2022/11/11/ally-to-all/

Can you recommend any other good links?

Signage at all of our events

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Improvements completed for 2023

- Larger print pronoun badges
- Revamped ‘crew / team’ badges.
- Workshops / feedback sessions on diversity and inclusion

Updated Team badge and lanyards

Any questions?

Final thoughts

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- Be kind to yourself
- Be kind to others
- Disability can be hidden
- Be open to learning
- Be open to being other view points

Please let us know what we can do better?
Share any great resources with us so we can share them