

The Joy of Unlearning Privilege/Oppression: What People from Privileged Groups Have to Gain

Knowledge and Clarity

People gain information and perspectives that offer new lenses for viewing themselves and the world-- becoming more conscious, informed and insightful.

- Intellectual understanding-of other cultural groups, of theories, manifestations and dynamic of oppression.
- Self-knowledge and awareness-of own biases, culture, socialization, internalized superiority.

An Enriched Life

People live with greater meaning and purpose with a broader range of relationships and experiences.

- Engagement with issues they feel passionately about and that feel significant.
- Connections with a greater array of people, particularly with whom they previously had limited relationships.
- Exposure to the cultures and wisdom of marginalized peoples.
- Improved relationships with people from their dominant group.

Authenticity and Greater Humanity

People feel more authentic within themselves, in their relationships, and in their lives.

- Expanded emotional capacities--greater compassion and feelings for and about other people.
- Less guarded and more spontaneous relationships with people from the subordinated group.
- Inner peace and spiritual integrity.

Empowerment, Confidence and Competence

A deeper understanding of oppression, a clearer sense of themselves, and more diverse relationships builds empowerment, confidence and competence to address social justice issues.

- Less defensiveness--easier to admit their errors, learn from them and keep going.
- Greater competence and effectiveness educating others about social justice issues.
- Improved ability to work with and serve people from oppressed groups.
- Improved ability to work with others from dominant groups, whether the same or different from their own.
- Greater ability to be a role model/resource for others from privileged groups.
- Greater ability to be an effective ally, interrupt oppression and work for social justice.

Liberation and Healing

People experience this is a transformative, freeing process that infuses their whole being and life.

- Fewer fears -- about what they'll find out about themselves, engaging with those who are different, doing or saying the wrong thing, offending others, or how their life would change for the worse.
- Healing from the myriad ways they are damaged psychologically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually by living within systems of inequality.