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## **Intersectionality: A piece of the Trauma Informed Response and Care (TIRC)**

### Key Talking Points

- 1.) Change is the only constant. With advances in technology and science, the world is changing so very fast. It is important to embrace the ability to change.
  - 2.) “The Theory of Intersectionality is a way to describe “Intersecting” of social identities and related systems of oppression, domination, or discrimination. The theory seeks to describe how various biological, social and cultural categories such as- but not limited to- gender, race, class, ability, sexual orientation, nation status, religion, caste, age and other sectarian axes of identity interact on multiple and often simultaneous levels”. This takes “Cultural Competency” to the next level.
  - 3.) Race/Ethnicity, Class, Gender, Religion, Sexual Orientation, Nation Status (amongst others) are all identities that influence our life experience.
  - 4.) “Ascribed Identities” are beyond a person’s control: Race, Class, Age, Gender (although fluid).
  - 5.) “Achieved Identities” are achieved through own efforts: Parent, Athlete, Spouse...
  - 6.) A “Master Status” is the identity that is center to persons experience and it can be fluid and contextual.
  - 7.) “The whole world is a stage”. We show the world our “First Persona”, which is just an image of who we are and only very surface. We show many of our loved ones our “Second Persona”, how we act when we are at home with family or among friends. Our “Third Persona” is our deep and very private side that people don’t generally see or know.
- It is essential to understand that we don’t know everything about everyone and the most cultured criminals are good at cultivating amazing “First and Second” Personas to serve as protection and defenses for the crimes that they commit in the “Third” persona.
- 8.) Intersectionality is a next step after the “Civil Rights Movement”. Social change is SLOW and often builds upon what came before.
  - 9.) We function in “Silos”. There is the race/ethnicity community, there is the gender community, the LGBTTQQIAAA+ or GSM community, the mental health community.... We also are in silos in the world of criminal justice: rape and sexual assault community, human trafficking community, DV community, child abuse community.... Silos are damaging because the humans that we serve do not live or function in silos. Plus, it creates competition for resources and there is plenty of violence to go around. Perpetrators of interpersonal violence generally don’t specialize but we do. Another unfortunate consequence of silos within the criminal justice system is that we specialize so much we often miss the opportunity to see outside the silos and hold the offenders accountable for the variety of crimes they commit.
  - 10.) On a biological level, race is a social construct, however there are tangible consequences.
  - 11.) The LGBTTQQIAAA+ or GSM community is complicated and diverse.
  - 12.) The sex of a person is the biological identification based on their physical body, while gender represents the “attributes” and “performance” of said sex. Gender has more than 37 recognized variations and is complicated.



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13.) Serious mental illness is also complicated, and we have a lot of room for improvement in this area as so many people fall in this category and it is often related to trauma. Our services are currently not able to properly address the needs of this complex community.

14.) Nation Status (in all countries) plays an important role in the access to resources.

15.) Understanding issues of class is essential because access to resources is inherently tied to class.

18.) We are bound by confirmation and implicit bias.

17.) Intersectionality is the “tool” we can use to “see, analyze and apply” a phenomenon that already exists. For us to really serve the vulnerable friends, family and community members we seek serve, we must have an understanding they live complicated, individualized and multi- dimensional lives.

18.) The “way” we choose to respond must be flexible enough to understand that each person is living a unique experience with. Trauma Informed Response and Care has flexibility and is the current “best way to do things”. (Knowing that in 10 years we will have evolved the knowledge base and will be improving from here...).

19.) Explore your goals for conversation: our goal is to evolve and improve. Thus- we must be patient with learning, be compassionate, be kind and be willing to help others in their learning. That said, it is essential that we understand it is our responsibility to learn about other people by exploring their world. The internet is a vast resource that allows us to self-educate.

20.) The word “Privilege” simply means that “you don’t have to worry about it”, whatever the “it” may be.

21.) Choice and Agency is important- it is a part of the actualization process.

22.) TIRC has over 150 different elements.

23.) “Call- Out” culture can create defensiveness, isolation and shame.

24.) To really listen and improve, we must evolve and get our egos out of the way. This work is about the people we serve. Let’s marry ourselves to the idea of “change”.

25.) Some programs are oversimplified and not able to change culture. Poster campaigns and one-shot presentations are not going to prevent violence. We need a total and complete overhaul. Our job in criminal justice is provide justice.

26.) Vicarious Trauma causes agency/ organizational toxicity. We must have zero tolerance policies on gossip, victim blaming and slut shaming.

27.) Hope had been and will always be the key.