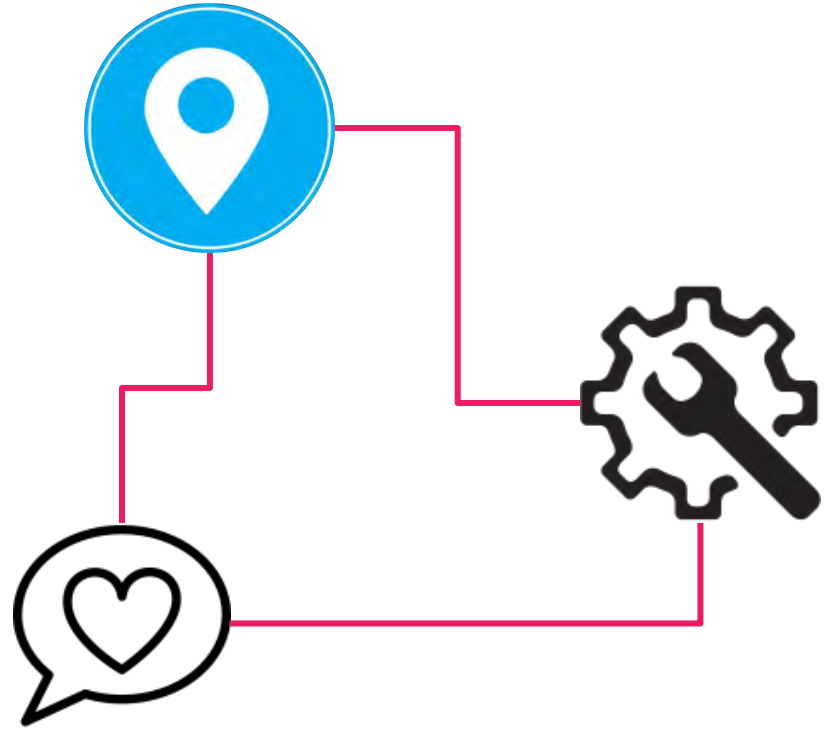


# Anti-Oppression as a Practice

OCADU Peer Mentors  
Anu Radha Verma (she/her), April 24, 2019

# Land Labour Love



**Disruption: how to practice anti-oppression  
given the current political climate?**



5th image from left, Credit: Viran Kohli

About me:  
 Queer | diasporic |  
 sometimes femme | survivor



Live and organize in the  
 suburbs  
 Independent curator &  
 consultant



2nd image from left, Credit: Muna-Udbi Ali

3rd image from left, Credit: melannie monoceros

# Goals for today

...

Learn about key concepts related to anti-oppression

Reflect on how to practice anti-oppression in your role as Peer Mentors (and in your life!)

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# Group Agreements - I/We agree to...

— — —

- Be open
- Be aware of the space we are taking up
- Be challenged, be uncomfortable
- Consider and honour confidentiality
- Have the right to pass
- Understand that there are/may be prior and historical harms  
... what else?

1.

What is unique about peer relationships?

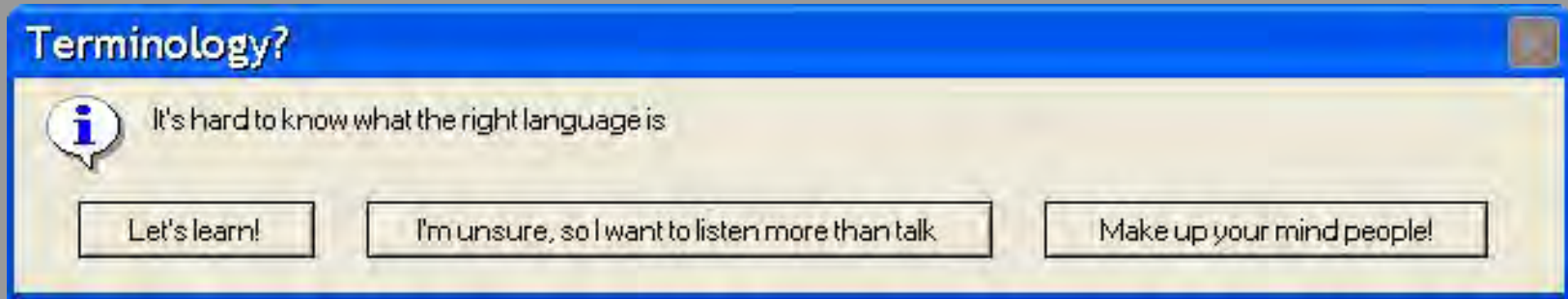
2.

What happens when we try to  
build relationships across  
difference?



3.

What kinds of things have you learned from a peer (whether at OCADU or elsewhere)?



Equity?!    Diversity!?

Inclusion?!    Anti-Oppression?!

# Systems of Power

- Racism
- Heteronormativity  
(Homophobia)
- Cisnormativity  
(Transphobia)
- Ableism
- Classism
- Sexism
- Sanism

... and more



# Anti-Oppression:

Strategies, theories and actions that challenge socially and historically built inequalities and injustices that are ingrained in our systems and institutions by policies and practices that allow certain groups to dominate over other groups.

What does anti-oppression look like at OCADU?

# Anti-Racism:

Anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism are distinct forms of racism reflecting historical and colonial contexts and current ways our society values Black and Indigenous communities.

# “But isn’t Canada better in terms of racism?”

Multiculturalism  
actually isn’t a good  
thing for racialized  
people or immigrants

- Colonization, genocide and discriminatory policies: harming Indigenous peoples through systems and practices
  - Doctrine of Discovery & *terra nullius*
- Slavery & exclusion of Black communities
- Selective immigration policies
- Internment and forced relocation

— — — And more...

“Canada is a great place for 2SLGBTQ+ people!”

# Barriers that 2SLGBTQ+ communities face

74% of trans students in Canada reported having been verbally harassed because of their gender identity - Egale Canada Human Rights Trust

2/3 of trans Ontarians reported avoiding public or shared spaces - TransPULSE

LGBTQ+ peoples with intersecting identities (including being racialized, disabled, poor, etc.) have an increased risk of violence and discrimination

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# The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by:  
**TSER**  
Trans Student Educational Resources

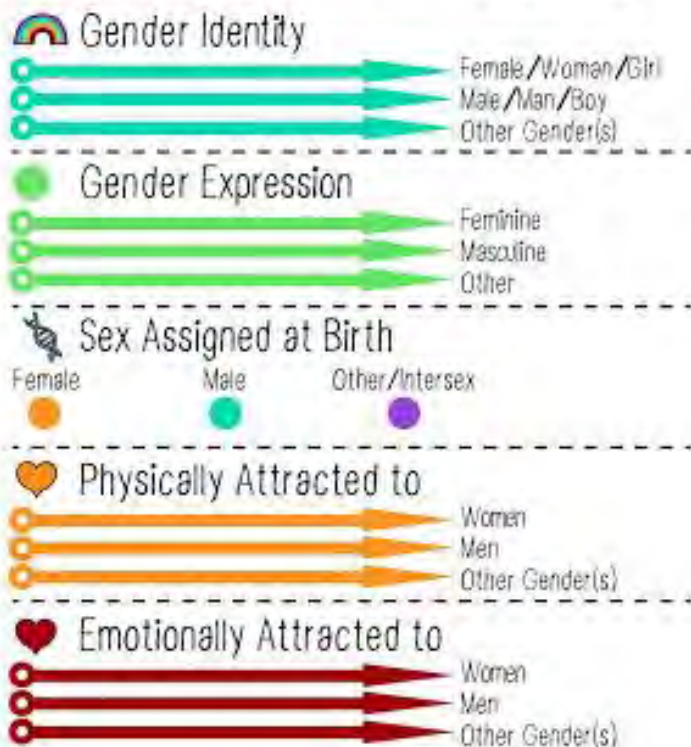
*Reminder  
about  
pronouns*

they/them

she/her

he/him

And more!



To learn more, go to:  
[www.transstudent.org/gender](http://www.transstudent.org/gender)

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore



# Intersectionality

<https://vimeo.com/user83638171/intersectionality>

“When feminism does not explicitly oppose racism, and when anti-racism does not incorporate opposition to patriarchy, race and gender politics often end up being antagonistic to each other and both interests lose.”

— KIMBERLÉ CRENSHAW, “Whose Story Is It, Anyway? Feminist and Antiracist Appropriations of Anita Hill”



SEAL PRESS

# Thinking about intersectionality...

How do race & class  
intersect?

How do ableism and sexism  
intersect?

What systems do you  
observe intersecting to  
impact students at OCADU?

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# Privilege

“Unearned power that gives dominant group members economic, social, and political advantages. It can also include rights that are denied to others and should be available to all.”

Tina Lopes & Barb Thomas, *Dancing on Live Embers: Challenging Racism in Organizations*

What does privilege look like at OCADU?



Sometimes You're a Caterpillar <https://youtu.be/hRiWgx4sHGg>

**Let's think about taking action...**



Equality vs Equity <http://culturalorganizing.org/the-problem-with-that-equity-vs-equality-graphic/>



Equality vs Equity <http://everydayfeminism.com/2014/09/equality-is-not-enough/>

"If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time; but if you are here because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."

--Lilla Watson, Murri academic, artist and activist



# Practicing Solidarity

- What is your own positionality?
- What have been the historical relationship between “your” community and the communities of your peers?
- Learn - continuous learning
- Respect, build, learn, respect



**Accomplices not Allies**

**Source: Indigenous Action  
Media (2014)**

**Relationship-building  
is the work.**

**Self-reflection  
is the work.**

# Thank you!



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