

BUILDING LIBERATORY CONNECTIONS: WORKING WITH SYSTEMIC TRAUMA IN COUPLES THERAPY

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HOPES

1. Assess the impact of systemic trauma on BIPOC and LGBTQI couples.
2. Implement two strategies to help couples to co-author new stories for their relationships.
3. Name the components of Relational privilege and its impact on BIPOC and LGBTQI couples

MARGINALIZED COUPLES

Individual Level minority stress

Couple Level minority stress

Race Based and Sex/Gender Based





Increased Psychological and Physical aggression

Higher Divorce rates

Decreased Marital Satisfaction

Withdrawal

Differential Power –Lack of connection

THE REALITY

WHAT IS RELATIONAL PRIVILEGE?

The ability to navigate romantic relationships that is directly connected to one's social location and systemic politics.

Navigation- Self Trust and Connectedness





WHAT IS RELATIONAL PRIVILEGE?

Due to structural oppression, historical trauma and systemic discrimination, marginalised groups do not always have these experiences.

Relational Privilege Wheel



"Shame is also the way that oppression becomes internalized. It is an emotional ritual for the marginalised. It is a practice necessary to maintain our already conditional belonging here. We feel shame for the aspects of ourselves that are most fundamental to who we are, that are tied not onto to our actions, but to our essence. Our Blackness, our genders, our queerness and all the things that accompany them-our skin tones, our hair textures, our cadences, our desires. And we feel shame about the secrets we hold, many that we hold to keep us together" -Prentis Hemphill, The Wisdom of Process

Disrupting the politics with P.R.I.D.E

P.R.I.D.E APPROACH

Pivot

Rumble

Imagine

Develop

Evolve



THE FIVE STEP APPROACH



1. **Assessing the degree of Relational Privilege (Relational Curiosity)**
2. Responsible Externalizing
3. Setting intentions
4. Ongoing Trauma Work
5. Building Liberatory Connections

RELATIONAL CURIOSITY

ASSESS THE DEGREE OF RELATIONAL PRIVILEGE

SIX FRAMES

BE WITH DISCOMFORT



RELATIONAL CURIOSITY

Brings to the fore the knowledge of the Implicit system (Felt sense of the world)

Brings to the fore sticky symptoms (JT.Shore)

Engages Witnessing Mind and Setting up curiosity

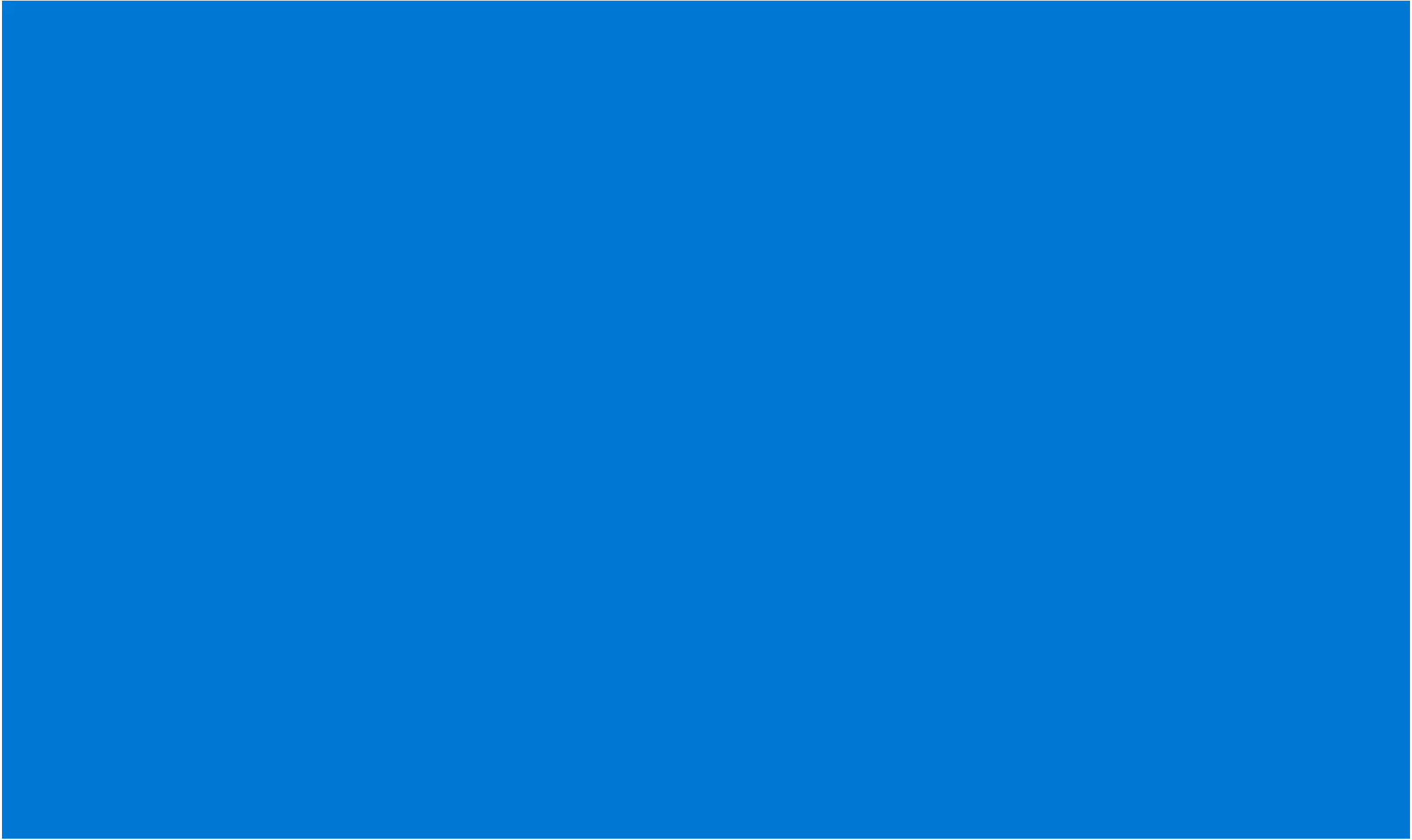


RELATIONAL CURIOSITY

- Relational Terrain
- Relational Privilege Score
- Family Narratives
- Coming out Story
- Habits of Survival
- Theater of Oppression

THEATRE OF OPPRESSION

- What is the theme of this theatre of oppression?
- What roles have you been cast in?
- What roles have you chosen to play in order to survive?
- How has the theme become alive in your relationship?
- How have the roles become alive in your relationship?
- How has this affected your degree of Relational Privilege?



THE WORK (RECAP)

1. Assessing the degree of Relational Privilege (Relational Curiosity)
2. **Responsible Externalizing**
3. Setting Intentions
4. Doing continuous trauma work
5. Building Liberatory Connections



RESPONSIBLE EXTERNALIZING



Deepening Critical
Consciousness

Recognition of
systemic/structural
violence

RESPONSIBLE EXTERNALIZING

Contact the Harm

Validate feelings

Proposing another cause (Mismatch)

Grieving

Micro-liberatory Movement

THE WORK (MIDWAY RECAP)

1. Assessing the degree of Relational Privilege (Relational Curiosity)
2. Responsible Externalizing
3. **Setting Intentions**
4. Doing continuous trauma work
5. Building Liberatory Connections

At each stage, integration is important





INTENTIONS

Relational

Structural

THE WORK (MIDWAY RECAP)

1. Assessing the degree of Relational Privilege (Relational Curiosity)
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At each stage, integration is important



TRAUMA WORK

Three primary techniques are used for Trauma work



TECHNIQUES

SOMOS

Intergenerational Compassionate Network

Relational Healing Circles

INTERGENERATIONAL COMPASSIONATE NETWORK

1. Contact the inherited adaptive responses/Emotional Knowing
2. Adopting a witnessing stance
3. Adopting a compassionate stance
4. Capture the spontaneous mismatch



THE WORK (RECAP)

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At each stage, integration is important



BUILDING LIBERATORY CONNECTIONS

Emancipatory politics

Establishing and Constructing Motivation (a relational invitation)

Painting a new picture, Drafting new stories, Unearthing undiscovered art/narratives



BUILDING LIBERATORY CONNECTIONS

Liberatory connections where relational and social change converge.

Corrective experiences designed to mitigate the effect of Systemic harm.

Experiences designed to equip partners to deal with Systemic harm

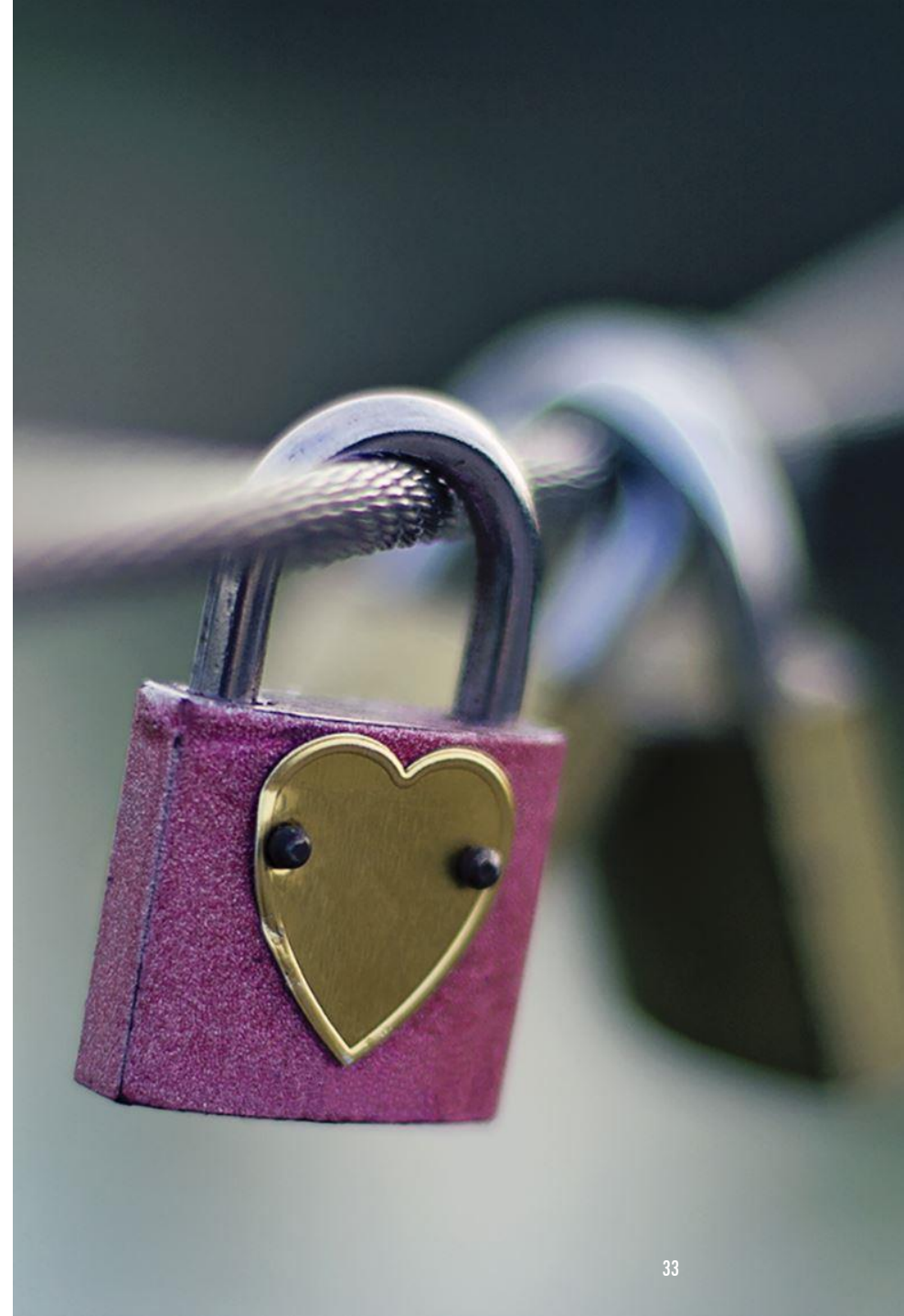
BUILDING LIBERATORY CONNECTIONS

1. **Building Relational Resilience**
2. Developing Relational Imagination
3. Decolonizing the Relationship
4. Halting the dance of the stereotypes
5. Direct Requests
6. Boundaries within and Around
7. Identity and Interpersonal Cherishing
8. Relational Naming
9. Sitting in the Elsewhere



BUILDING RELATIONAL RESILIENCE

- What are the unique protective factors in this relationship/relationship form? (Value of Identity)
- How can we nurture it and build this?
- What are the building blocks we must implement to foster relational resilience?
- What are we liberating ourselves from with this process?
- Who are we now?







THE WORK (FINAL RECAP)

1. **Assessing the degree of Relational Privilege (Relational Curiosity)**
2. **Responsible Externalizing**
3. **Setting Intentions**
4. **Doing continuous trauma work**
5. **Building Liberatory Connections**

FOR MORE INFO

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