research in practice

Tool 2: Creating a space for intersectional reflection

This tool helps you identify how to build a space to reflect about intersectionality.

The Change Project group agreed principles that underpinned our conversations. This tool will explore how these principles can be used in practice to create a safe space to hold intersectional discussions and reflections.

The **principles of intersectional work** that were agreed were:

> **Courage** – taking the risk to speak out, sit with discomfort, remain resilient.
> **Wisdom** – being okay with not knowing, appreciation of situated knowledge.
> **Compassion** – different positions in the intersection mean different injuries.
> **Respect** – being open to others and considerate in what you say and do.

The principles that we worked to were:

> Everyone has something important to offer.
> Everyone has the opportunity to take part.
> Everyone receives something back for putting something in.
> We will adopt a learner mindset.
> We will recognise the impact of these conversations on each other.

The first three principles come from SCIE's work on co-production and the last two from Jenny Garrett global.

Reflective questions:

These can be used for individual reflection or considered before holding an intersectional discussion.

1. **Consider how you have sat with discomfort in the past.**
   > What has put you out of your comfort zone and what has sustained you?
   > How will you bring supportive factors into this space?

2. **All spaces are configured on intersections of power, privilege and position; this includes spaces designed to reflect on intersectionality.**
   > How do you explicitly acknowledge this in the space?
   > How do you check out people's understanding of power, privilege and position?

3. **Safety isn't static; it is a moment by moment experience of what is going on in the context.**
   > When and how will you check in with people?
   > What can be done on a personal and collective level to shift unsafe to safe?

4. **When people stand at an intersection, they are at risk of collision. The principles can keep everyone driving safely.**
   > When and how will you return to the principles?
   > How will you evoke the principles when they are needed?

5. **Consider how you will acknowledge people's contribution, in particular people who have internalised experiences of being unsafe.**
   > How will you take account of the power dynamics that enable and inhibit people contributing?
   > How will you acknowledge the emotional labour of people's contributions?

6. **Recognise that time is needed for people to take care of themselves and each other.**
   > How will you give people the chance to debrief?
   > What support will be available outside of this space?

You may find these thoughts from those who took part in the Change Project helpful:

> *'Minoritised groups in the workforce are always thinking about who can you trust.'*

> *'We all need to be thinking about power, privilege and position.'*

> *'Power can play out in a single look.'*

> *'It's exhausting to deal with the vehicles of oppression.'*

> *'We can be defensive against the trauma of being in close proximity to inequity.'*

> *'We can be frightened of engaging with inequity in case we cannot change it.'*

> *'We need to help people to connect to intersectionality and not see intersectionality as overwhelming.'*

> *'Listening to each other has been a good experience.'*