

## Tool 7: Intersectional reflection on the master's tools

This tool helps you to consider what causes inequity and the importance of thinking and acting differently to bring about change.

Audre Lorde wrote that 'the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house.' This means that to fundamentally change the current inequitable system we need different ways of thinking and different tools.

*'What does it mean when the tools of a racist patriarchy are used to examine the fruits of that same patriarchy? It means that only the most narrow parameters of change are possible and allowable.*

*Those of us who stand outside the circle of this society's definition of acceptable women; those of us who have been forged in the crucibles of difference -- those of us who are poor, who are lesbians, who are Black, who are older -- know that survival is not an academic skill. It is learning how to take our differences and make them strengths. For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change.'*

Lorde, A. (1979) The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house [video]. [Audre Lorde - The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House | Genius](#)



### Reflective questions:

- > What are your initial reactions to the above paragraphs? How does the idea of 'the master's tools' resonate with you and your experience?
- > Who in social care stands outside the circle of this society's definition of acceptable?
- > What are the master's tools in social care? How do they cause inequity?
- > What does it mean to 'take our differences and make them strengths' in adult social care?
- > What different tools (ways of thinking, being and acting) would help to bring about genuine change in social care through increasing equity?

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

- > *'Our tools are the resources, skills, experience, techniques, people including us.'*
- > *'Tools include law and policy.'*
- > *'If we use the same tools as the house is built from then we won't dismantle it.'*
- > *'There is an opportunity to think about how tools add to or dismantle issues, for example tools that add to or reduce hierarch.'*
- > *'How is intersectionality a different kind of tool? It adds a different edge to the tools that we use.'*
- > *'Different tools come from different origins; some come from grassroots lived experience.'*