

Social Identities

Social identities reflect how we see ourselves and how others see us with respect to major social categories. Their meanings are not fixed but take shape in particular social contexts. They are sometimes obvious and clear, sometimes not obvious and unclear, often self-claimed and frequently ascribed by others. For example, gender and racial groupings are often ascribed as well as self-claimed. Government, schools, and employers often ask an individual to claim a racial identity group or gender, or they ascribe one based on visual perception. Other social identities—such as sexual orientation, religion, class, or disability status—might be personally claimed but may or may not be announced or easily visually ascribed. Some identities are fluid and change over time.

How we see ourselves (and how others see us) can vary depending on particular contexts and who the others are in a given situation. Even with such contingencies and contexts, we nonetheless can have a general sense about our identities. For the purpose of this exercise, please identify the memberships you claim or those that are ascribed to you in this general sense.

Below are social categories that have widespread salience, and a few examples of ways people identify within them. It's NOT a full list. Please use your own language to describe how you identify.

Gender	Cisgender Woman/Womxn, Cisgender Man, Transgender Woman, Transgender Man, Boi, Boy, Girl, Femme, Genderqueer, Two-Spirited, Gender Fluid, Gender Nonbinary, Agender
Sex	Intersex, Female, Male
Race	Asian/Pacific American, Indigenous/Native American, Arab American, Latinx, Black, White, Bi/Multiracial
Ethnicity	Irish, Chinese, Puerto Rican, Italian, Mohawk, Jewish, Guatemalan, Lebanese, European-American, Cuban, Chicanx, Filipinx, French, Samoan, Tongan, Irish, Puerto Rican, Anglo, Dutch
Sexual orientation	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Heterosexual, Queer, Pansexual, Asexual, Demisexual, Fluid, Questioning, Aromantic
Religion/ Faith	Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, Pagan, Agnostic, Atheist, Secular Humanist, Baha'i, Sikh, Catholic, Christian, Rastafarian, Unitarian Universalist, Shinto, Native American Traditional Practitioner or Ceremonial
Socioeconomic Class	Poor, Working Class, Lower-Middle Class, Upper-Middle Class, Owning Class, Ruling Class, Newly Independent
Age	Child, Adolescent, Teenager, Young Adult, Middle-Aged Adult, Senior/Elderly
Ability	People with disabilities (cognitive, physical, emotional, etc.), Temporarily able-bodied, Temporarily Disabled, Living with a Disability, Living with Chronic Disease, Deaf, People with Hearing Loss, Asperger's/Autism spectrum, Acquired/Traumatic Brain Injury, Low Vision or Blind, Anxiety, Depression
National Origin and Citizenship	Nigeria, Japan, Korea, Turkey, Argentina, Guatemala, Ireland, Barbados, Dominican Republic, United States
Tribal or Indigenous Affiliation	Mohawk, Aboriginal, Navajo, Santal
Body Size/Type	Person of Size, Plus-Sized, Mid-Sized, Curvy, Thin, Slim, Athletic, Stocky, Muscular, Large
Other Identities	What other social identities are important in your communities?

Social Identity Activity

Here are some examples of social categories! This isn't a comprehensive list. Please use your own language to describe how you identify.

Gender

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Sex

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Race

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Ethnicity

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Sexual orientation

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Religion/
Faith

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Socioeconomic
Class

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Age

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Ability

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National Origin
and Citizenship

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Tribal or
Indigenous
Affiliation

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Body Size/Type

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Other Identities

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Where Do You Go From Here?



After our personal and group reflections on social identities, are there actions you can commit to take in each of the following areas?

Self Understanding

Supporting Marginalized Group Members

Creating Cultural Change

Ally Actions