



## **ALLY**

- The ally can be a member of the target group or not
- Being an ally can take many forms. If you witness an act of oppression, you may not necessarily feel safe or able to intervene in the moment, but you can take active steps to intervene in other ways (after the fact). For example, you might check in with the person who was targeted after the situation has passed.
- The impact an ally who also happens to be a member of the oppressing group can have on transforming a situation, can be far greater than if the ally happens to be a member of the oppressed group.
- Remember to take care of yourself first. Being an ally is usually not comfortable or easy, but it is important to honor your own needs as well.

**What makes it difficult to be an ally?**

## **BYSTANDER**

- The bystander is defined by inaction, complacency and passive participation.
- Being a bystander is a choice.
- Has the potential to take on any of the other three roles depending on what action is taken

**Why do you think we slip into this role?**

## **TARGET**

The target is simply the recipient of oppressive attitudes, actions, words, etc.

## **OPPRESSOR**

The oppressor can be defined as an individual, group or institution that engages in an act or acts of oppression toward another person or group. Each of us has the capacity to be an oppressor, and each and every one of us has taken on this role at some point in our lives, consciously or unconsciously.

**Pair & Share: Turn to a partner and share about a time when you oppressed another person/group. Discuss how you felt in the moment, afterward, and why you think you did it.**



## ESSENTIAL DEFINITIONS

**Racism:** Racism is race prejudice plus power.

**Classism:** Refers to discrimination based on one's class in society. Notion that people deserve the privilege or oppression of their class based on their social status, level of education, job, work ethic, access to resources, access to exclusive language.

**Heterosexism:** "The belief in the inherent superiority of heterosexuality and thereby its rights to dominance" (Canadian Council for Refugees); describes an ideological system and patterns of institutionalized oppression which deny, denigrate, and stigmatize any non-heterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship, or community.

**Transphobia:** The fear and persecution of transgender/ gender-queer persons. Rooted in a desire to maintain the gender binary (i.e. the categories of 'male' and 'female'), which obscures the fluidity of gender and renders the experience of persons who do not identify with either category invisible.

**Prejudice:** A prejudice is a pre-judgment in favor of or against a person, a group, an event, an idea, or a thing. An action based on prejudice is discrimination. A negative prejudice is often called a stereotype. These definitions are not set in stone.

**Privilege:** Social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to members of a dominant group (e.g. white privilege, male privilege, etc). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because we're rarely taught to see it, but having privilege and recognizing it means that one is in an excellent position to use their privilege as an ally.

**Oppression:** Related to interpersonal and institutionalized power built and perpetuated throughout the course of history; allows certain 'groups' to confer dominance over other 'groups' and this dominance is maintained and perpetrated at an institutional level.

**Institutional Violence:** the use of power to cause harm (i.e. Violation of human rights) and to enforce structural oppression.

**Stereotype:** is an oversimplified generalization about a person/group of people without regard for individual differences. Even positive stereotypes, such as Asians are good at math and computers, have a negative impact.

**Discrimination:** is a behavior or action that can follow prejudicial thinking. Discrimination is the denial of justice and fair treatment in many arenas, including employment, housing, and political rights.

**Scapegoating:** is the action of blaming an individual or group for something when, in reality, there is no one person or group responsible for the problem. Scapegoating is blaming another person or group for problems in society because of that person's group identity. Prejudicial thinking and discriminatory acts can lead to scapegoating. Members of the disliked group are denied employment, housing, political rights, social privileges, or a combination of these. Scapegoating can lead to verbal and physical violence, including death.

**Ableism:** is prejudice and/or discrimination against people with mental, physical or developmental disabilities.