

# Social Justice: Unpacking Identity

by Dr. Deborah Taylor

What is identity?

How is identity developed?

How does identity affect our relationships?

Identity as a way to understanding self/other.

# Southern Poverty Law Center

- Teaching Tolerance provides a way for me to promote social justice, challenge bias, and engage students in discussions about diversity that would perhaps not happen otherwise.
- SPLC is dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry and to seeking justice for the most vulnerable members of our society. Using litigation, education, and other forms of advocacy, the SPLC works toward the day when the ideals of equal justice and equal opportunity will be a reality.

# Students will:

- ID.1. develop positive social identities based on their membership in multiple groups in society;
- ID.2. develop language and historical and cultural knowledge that affirm and accurately describe their membership in multiple identity groups;
- ID.3. recognize that people's multiple identities interact and create unique and complex individuals

Identity formation result of complex interplay among factors: life events, community expectations, societal expectations, categorization, national or international events

- Although we construct our identities to some extent, society does, too.
- Our identities affect the way we interact with the world.
- Our identities affect the way the world interacts with us.

# Characteristics of identity

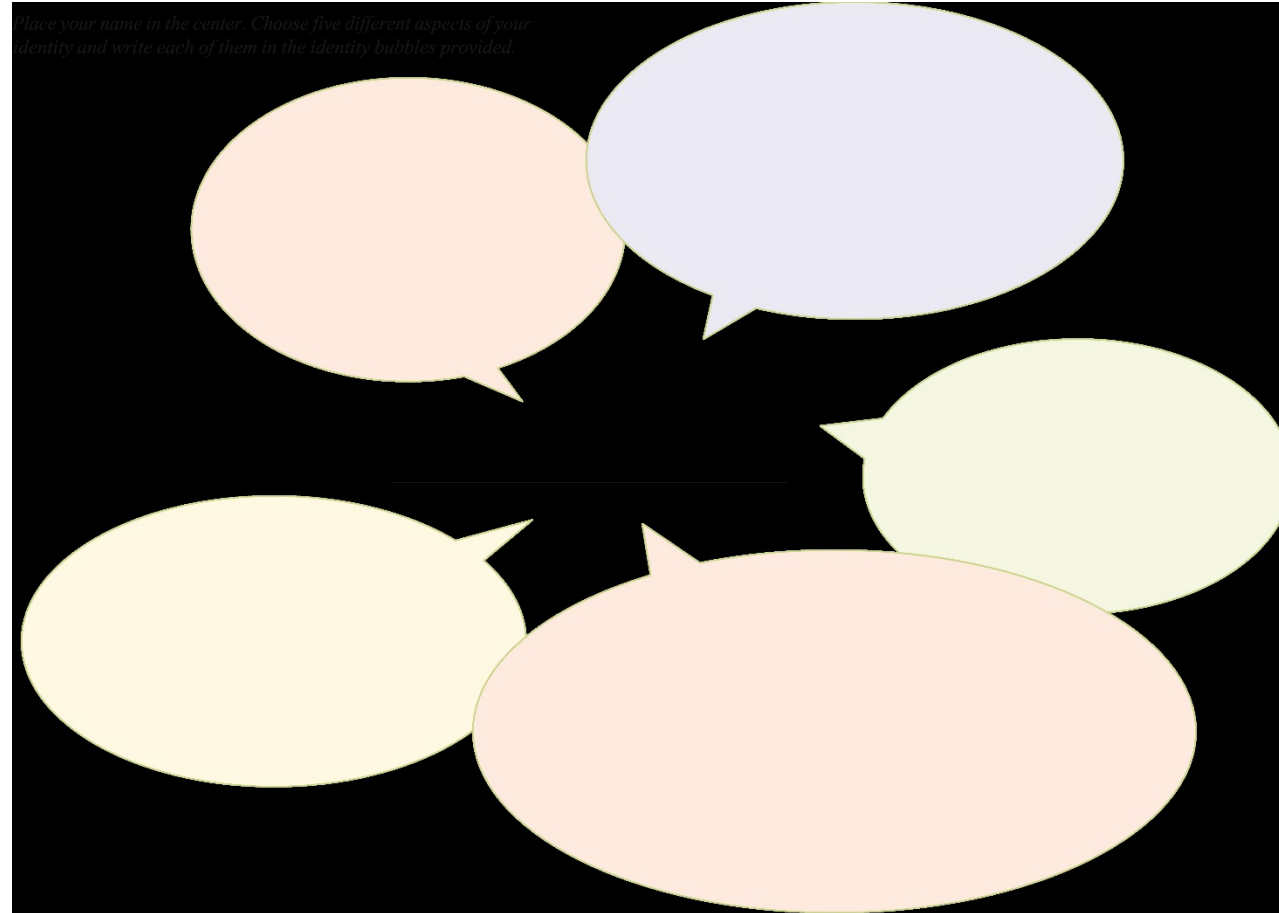
## **Parts of our identity include:**

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Race
- Religion
- Socioeconomic status
- Language
- Marital/relationship status
- Parent or childless
- Family size and composition
- Sexual orientation
- Education
- Career

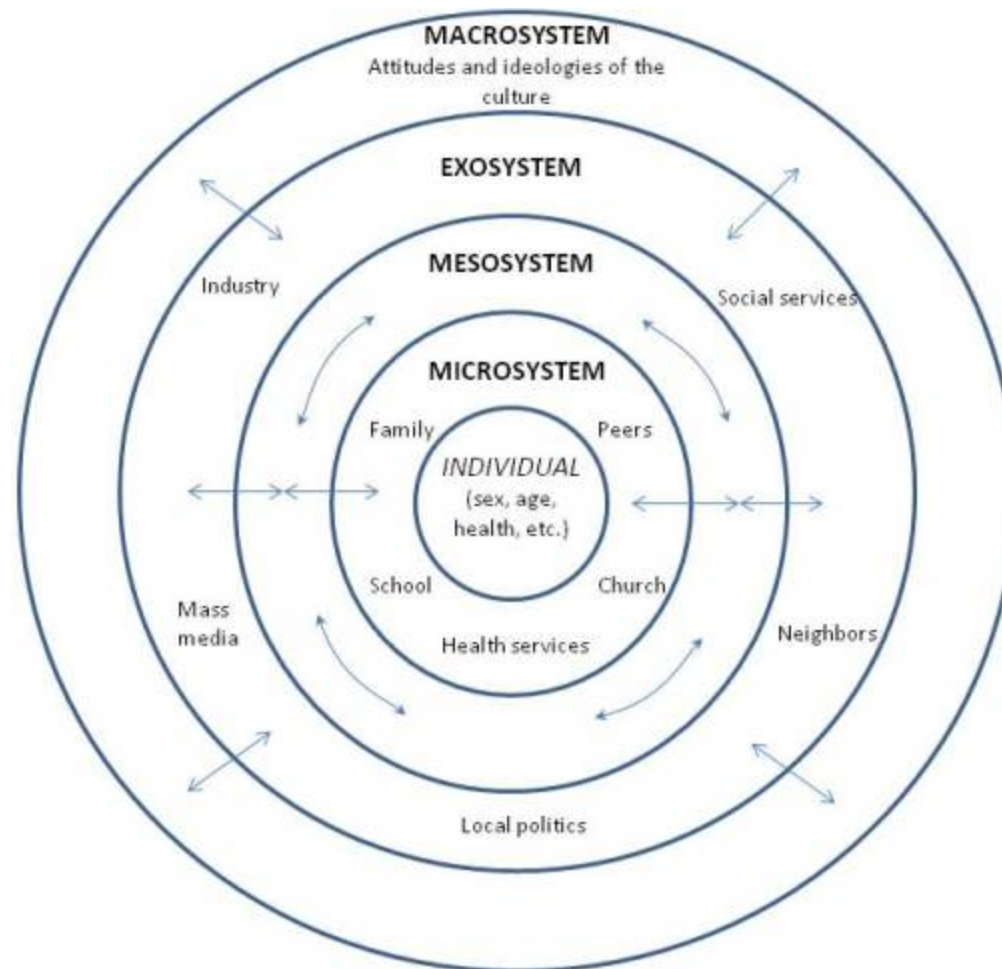
How would you identify these attributes? Fill out chart below.

<b>Identity Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
Gender	
Ethnicity	
Race	
Religion	
Socioeconomic Status	
Language	
Marital/relationship status	
Parent or childless	
Family size and composition	
Sexual Orientation	
Education	
Career	

# Visual people can use the bubbles for different parts of identity



Micro	Individual, family, interpersonal
Meso	Communities, workplace, neighborhood, schools, churches
Macro	Institutional structures State structures like Dept. education,
Global	Institutional structures, behaviors related to global – United Nations to Walmart, Transnational



# Self-reflective process

- Where do you come from? Who are you? How has your identity changed? How do you figure out your identity?
- Which parts of your identity do you emphasize? Which do you underplay? Why?
- Who are your “people?” Where or what are “home” and “community?”
- How many generations have your family members been in the United States? What was their first relationship to it? Under what conditions did they become a part of the United States?

# Connections to history, culture, power

- What do you know of your family's culture and history before it became part of the United States? What is your social location?
- Which of the social dimensions of your identity provide power and privilege? Which provide less power or even disadvantage?

# Diversity

- How do our various group identities shape us as individuals?
- What part do culture and history play in the formation of our individual and collective identities?
- How do our intersecting identities shape our perspectives and the way we experience the world?
- How does struggle help define who we are?

# What is Cultural Competence?

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## Cultural Competence Approach



The **capability** to shift cultural perspective and adapt—or bridge--behavior to cultural commonality & difference