



RESPECTING  
DIVERSITY  
*THROUGH* JOINT  
SOCIAL ACTION

WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY  
21ST MARCH 2023  
#WSWD2023



Siobhan Maclean for North East Lincs

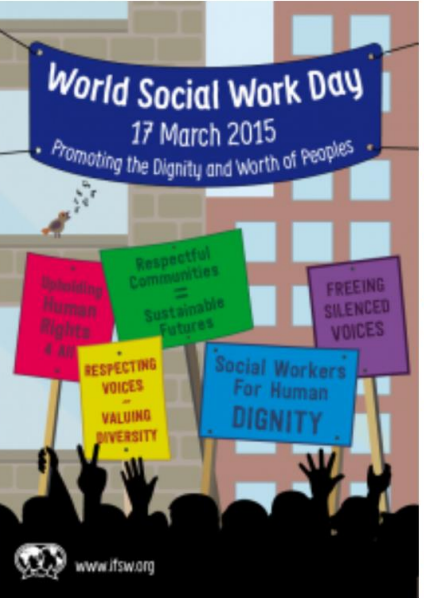
# World Social Work Day 2014

18 March 2014 Worldwide

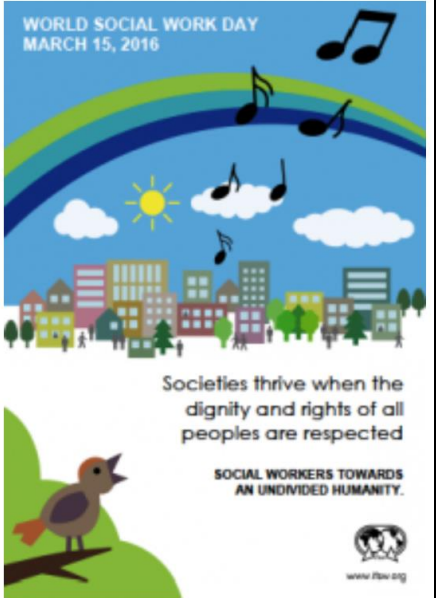
Social and Economic Crises –  
Social Work Solutions:



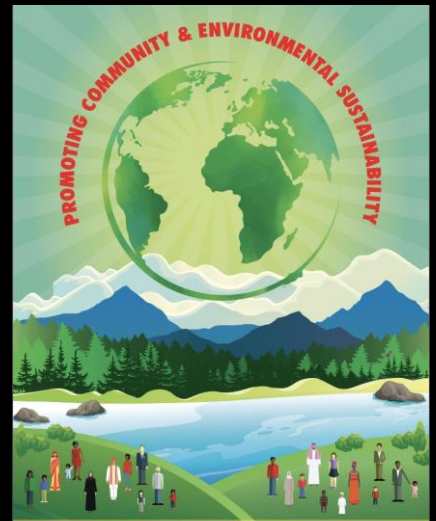
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WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY  
20TH MARCH 2018

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JUC

BASW  
The professional association for social workers and social workers

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# 'What 3 Words'....



What 3 words would you use to describe social work?

# International definition of social work

“Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and **respect for diversities are central to social work**. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledges, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing.”

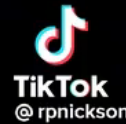


**“Social work is about life, treasuring humanity, building connections, sharing and promoting fairness. It is about creativity, care and love – being there to help people overcome obstacles and oppressions that hold them back. For people using our services, a social worker should be someone to trust and believe in – someone who helps you believe in yourself. Sometimes we must hold boundaries, protect rights, advocate and challenge. We are always in the midst of the messy stuff, finding ways forward.”**

(Ruth Allen. BASW Chief Exec. 2018)



I don't imagine that anyone would include IKIGAI as one of your three words. But let me share with you something that a new practitioner sent to a group that I am working with...



THERE'S AN ANCIENT

# 'What 3 Words'....



What 3 words would you use to define diversity?

**DIVERSITY**



**EQUALITY**



**INCLUSION**



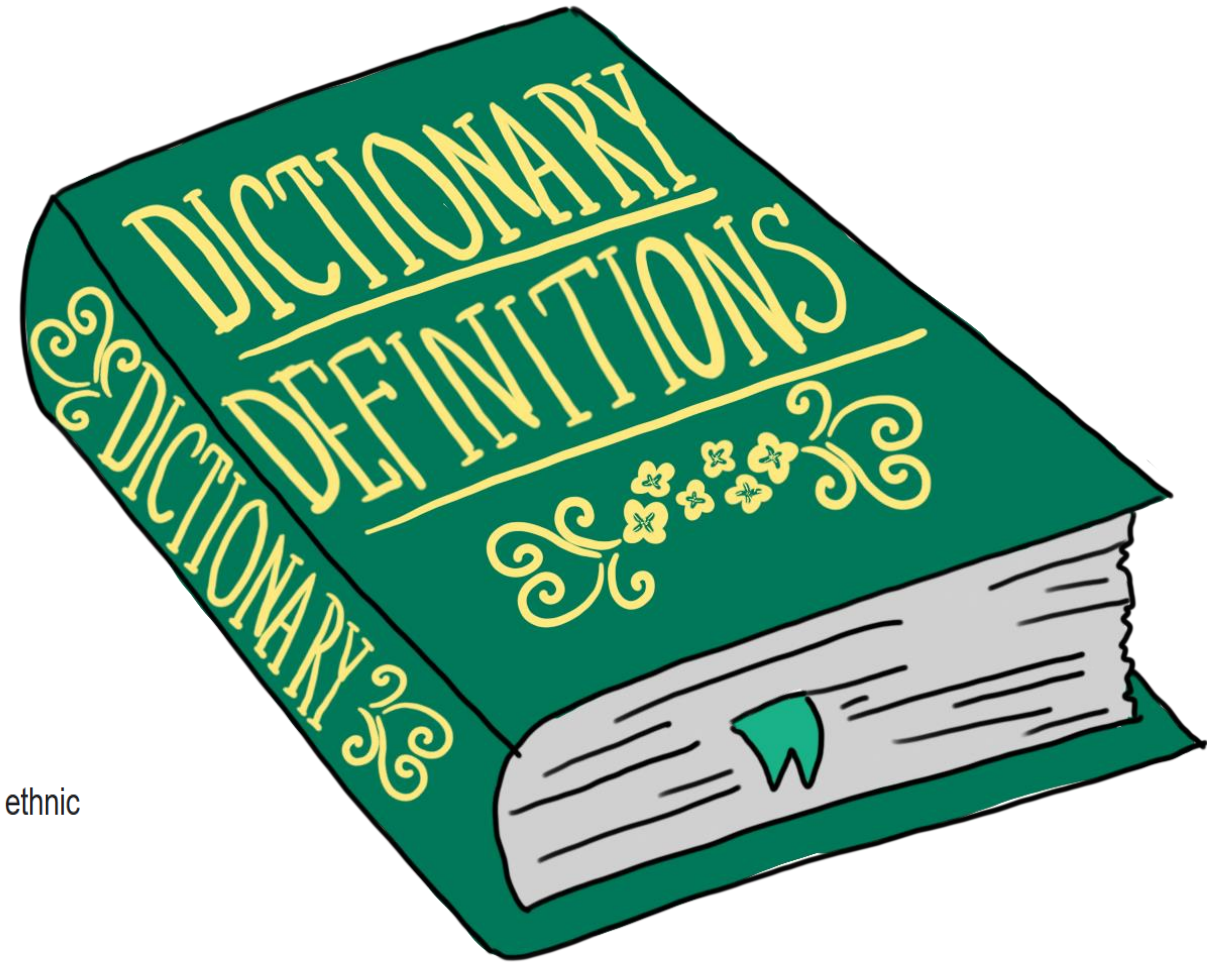


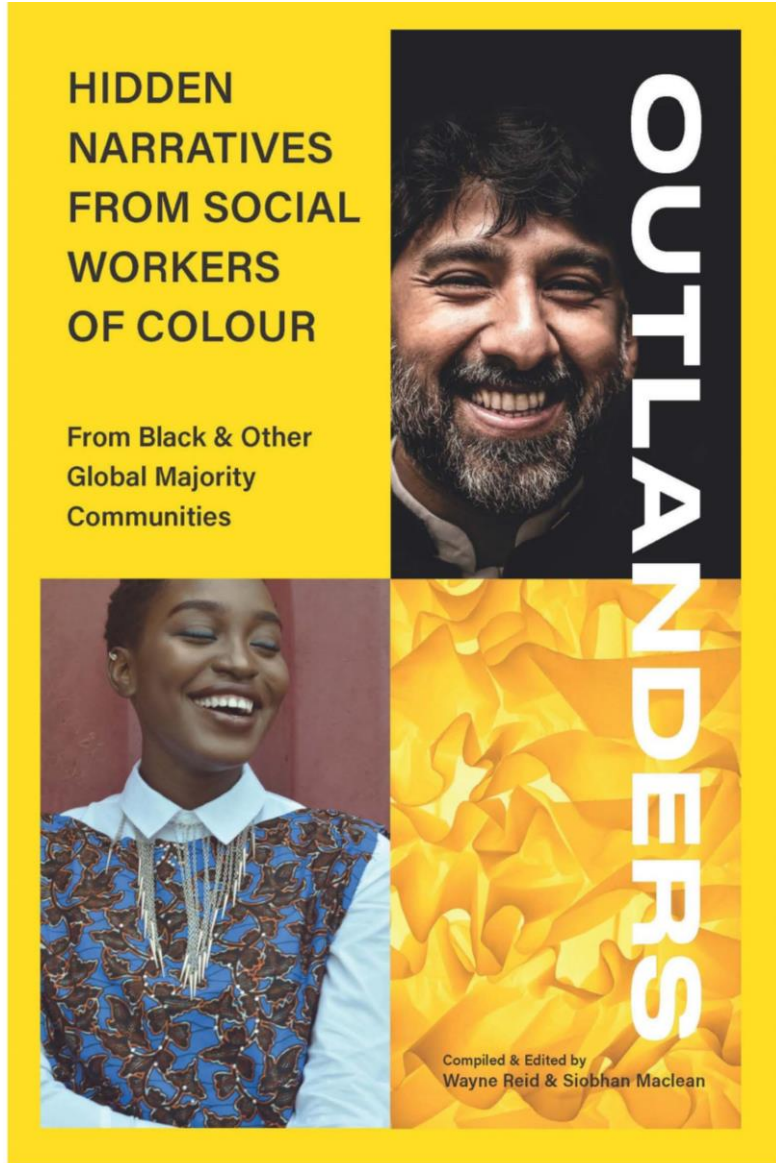
# diversity

/dɪˈvɜːsɪti, dɪˈvəːsɪti/

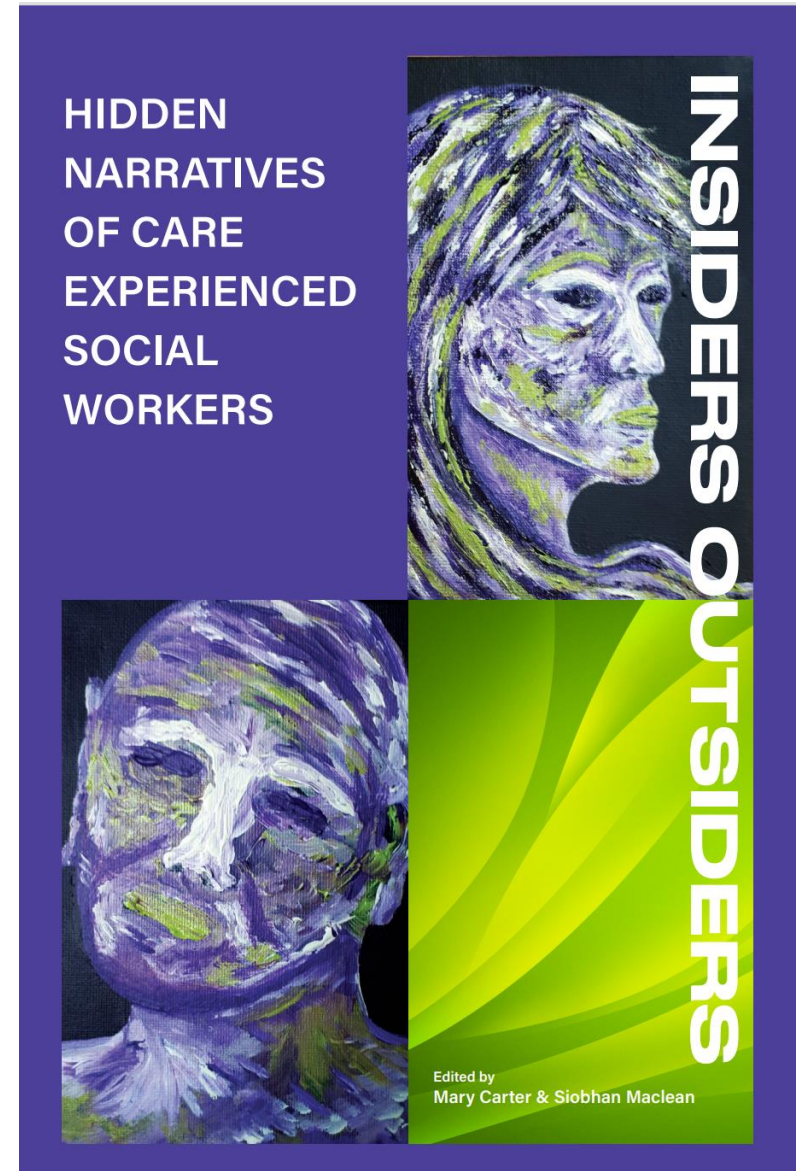
*noun*

1. the state of being diverse; variety.  
"there was considerable diversity in the style of the reports"
2. the practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc.  
"equality and diversity should be supported for their own sake"





The need to 'respect' diversity is very clear in these anthologies





But I think this should be about more than RESPECTING diversity



# Neurodiversity Celebration Week

13-19 March 2023

It should be about **CELEBRATING** diversity

To what extent are you recognising, respecting and even celebrating diversity?



# Anti-oppressive practice



- What does it mean to you?
- I find a great deal of confusion in social work about the difference between non oppressive and anti oppressive practice
- In many ways that confusion mirrors whether we respect or celebrate diversity..

# A-Z of Anti-oppressive Practice

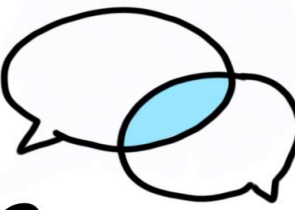
Anti  
Aa



Bias  
Bb




Communication  
Cc



Disrupt  
Dd



Exhausted  
Ee



Freedom  
Ff



GRACES  
Gg



Hegemony  
Hh



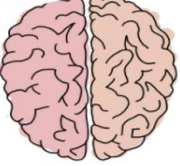
Inclusivity  
Ii



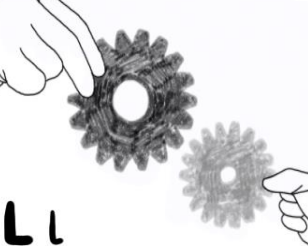
Judgement  
Jj




Knowledge  
Kk



Linked  
Ll



EMpower  
Mm



New to me  
Nn



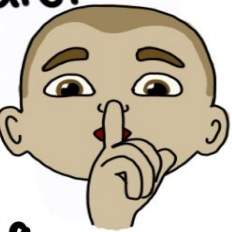
Othering  
Oo



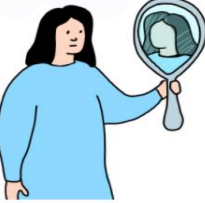
Prospera  
Tedam  
Pp




Quiet  
Qq



Reflect  
Rr



Structures  
Ss



Trauma  
Tt



Unconscious  
Bias  
Uu



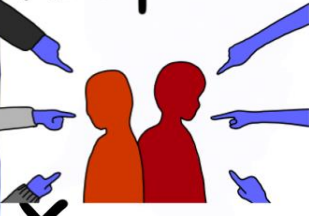
Vital  
Vv



Welfarism  
Ww




Xenophobia  
Xx



Yard  
Yy



Zoo  
Zz



Siobhan Maclean

# Z is for... ZOO

Processes of dehumanisation are rife and surround us in social work. How do you challenge dehumanisation in your practice?

- 'Feeding'
- 'Swarms'

**WE NEED COURAGE AT TIMES WHERE WE ARE ALL EXHAUSTED TO WORK IN AN ANTI-OPPRESSIVE WAY AND TO LEAD THE WAY FOR OTHERS.**





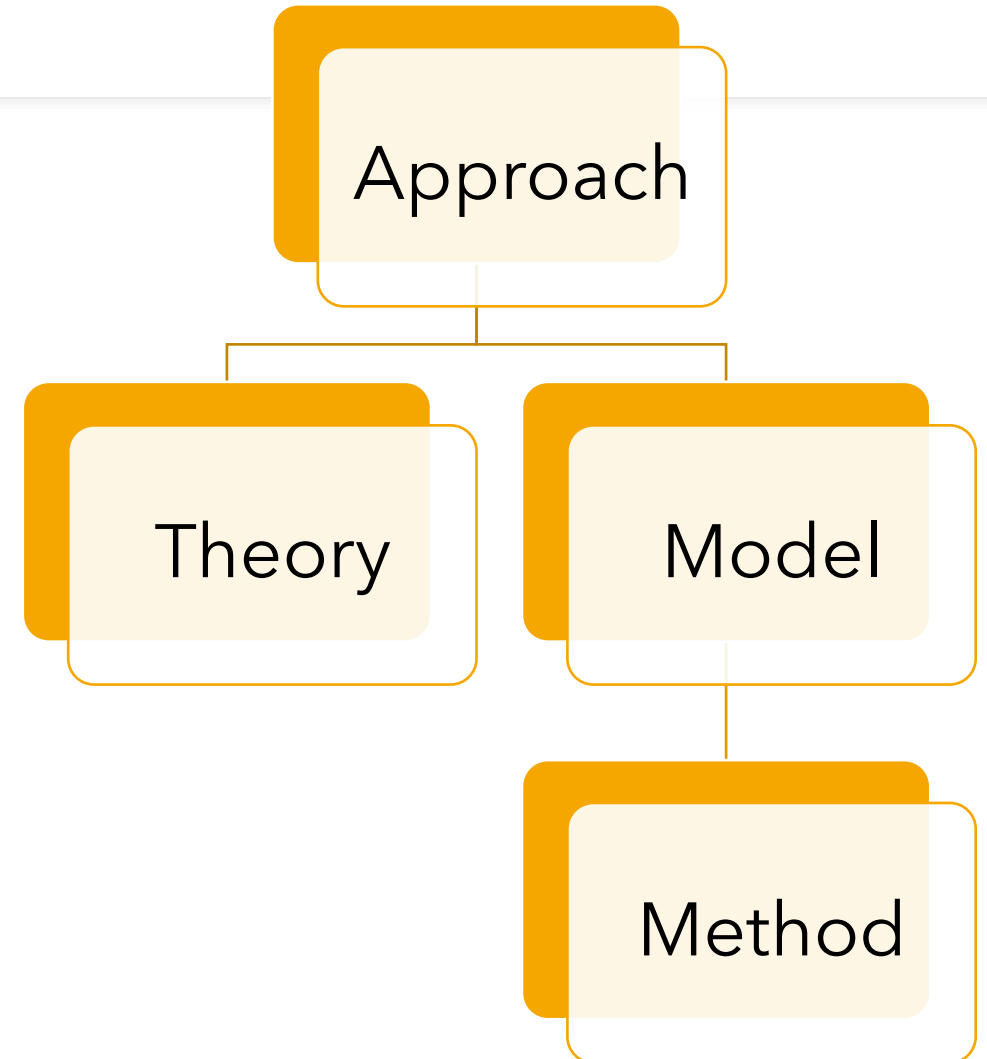
# The theory 'framework'?

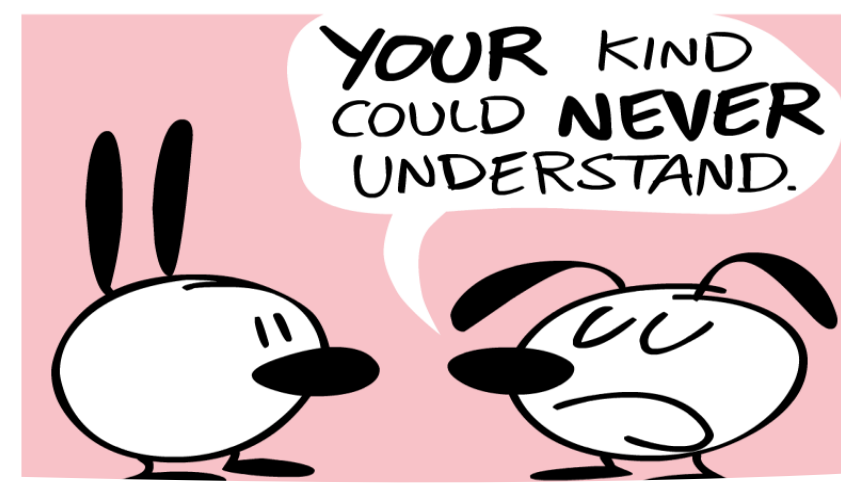
An approach is the **overall way** we go about something

A theory helps us to **understand**

A model helps us to **intervene**

A method is a specific tool used in practice





# Othering

- Spivak (1985) originally coined 'othering'
- Othering occurs through the labelling and stereotyping of the 'other'
- "Not one of us"
- The theory of othering draws on an understanding of 'self' which is often related to the 'master-slave' dialectic originally developed by Hegel. Essentially the theory is that a person's sense of their own self comes from them comparing themselves against the 'other'.

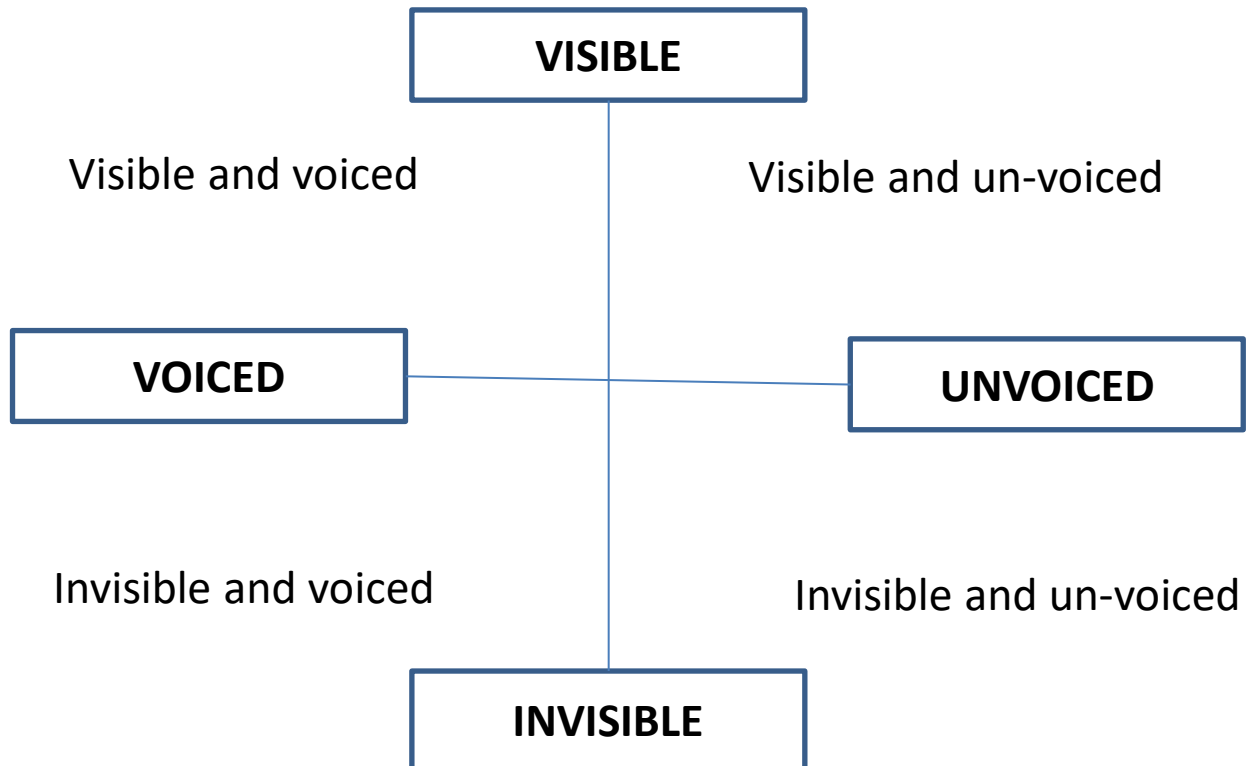
# The Social GRRRAACCEESSS

- A framework for counselling developed by John Burnham
- Useful in understanding our 'self'
- Who are we and who is the person we are working with?



# Social Graces (John Burnham)

- Gender
- Geography
- Race
- Religion
- Age
- Ability
- Appearance
- Class
- Culture
- Ethnicity
- Education
- Employment (Economics, Environment)
- Sexuality
- Sexual Orientation
- Spirituality



# Discourse analysis



- This is sometimes referred to as critical analysis. It is basically a way of questioning that seeks to identify the assumptions which society is based on, recognising the impact of these assumptions on social relationships.
- There is an understanding that ideas and arguments are constructed to suit the powerful 'elite'.
- For example, think about the discourse that people in receipt of benefits are 'undeserving'. The mass media and television programmes promote this discourse using language such as 'scrounging', claiming that people in receipt of benefits are taking money away from 'hard-working families'. This creates a negative societal view of the welfare state which could mean that the politically powerful could choose to dismantle the welfare state with limited resistance from the general public. Other discourses which argue that the rich are not paying the taxes which they should, do not receive the same coverage and so these arguments do not become the 'dominant discourse'.

# Social Constructionism

- Social constructionism highlights the way that realities are generated by people (social) and then applied through the activity of public services and other organisations (constructed). One of the consequences of this is that views and opinions can change and so the way that society orders itself can also change
- Everything is socially 'constructed' through discourses, language....
- Essentially society is a social product



# 'Feeding': what do you see?

- We feed babies and animals – people EAT
- So the use of the word feeding creates a construct which is infantilising (as if a child) and dehumanising (less than human)
- What other language can you think of which creates a construct?



# PCS

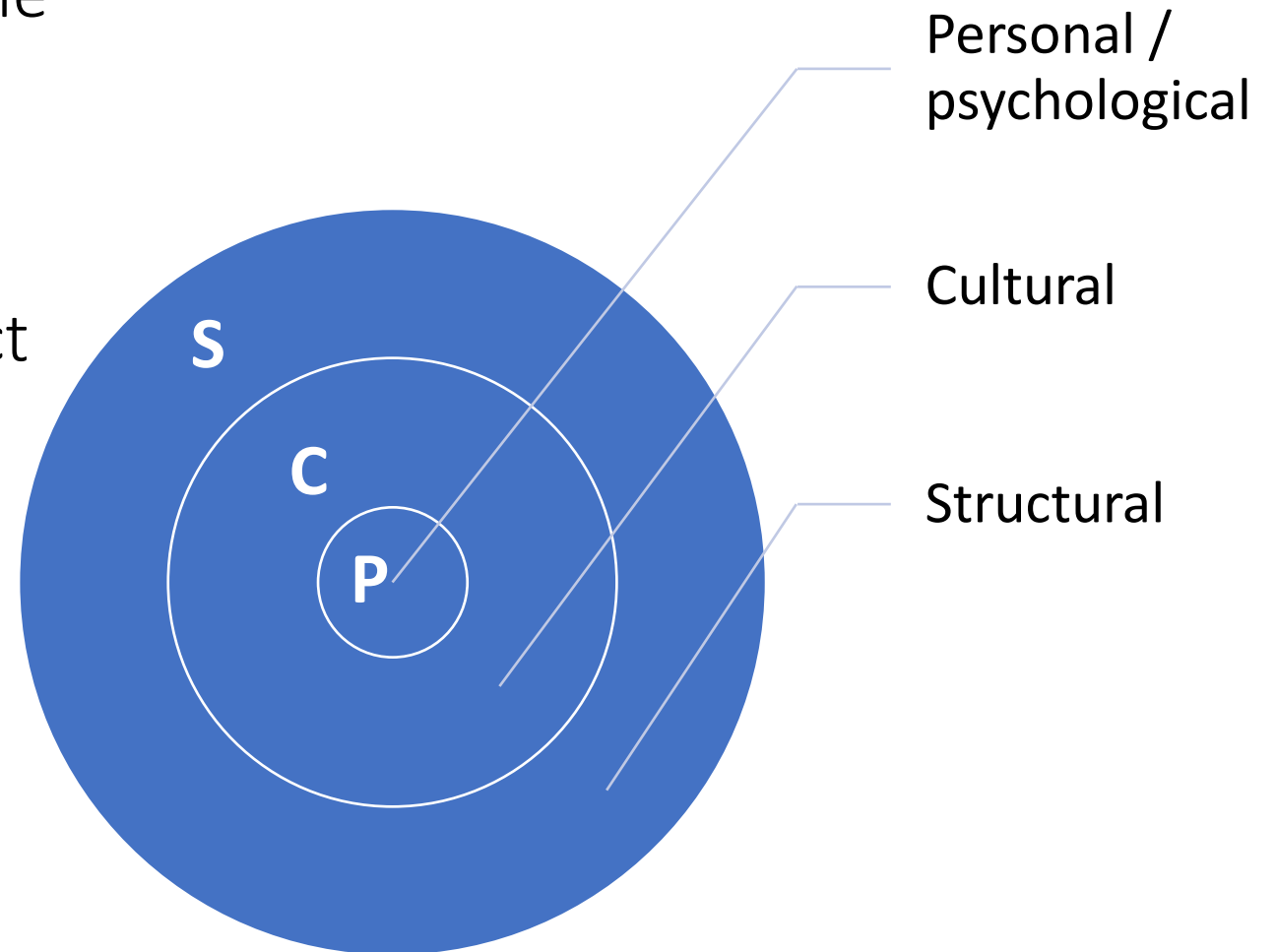
Developed by Thompson (2005) the PCS offers a way to analyse how oppression operates and how it impacts on service users.

Proposes three levels which impact on one another:

P – personal or psychological

C – cultural

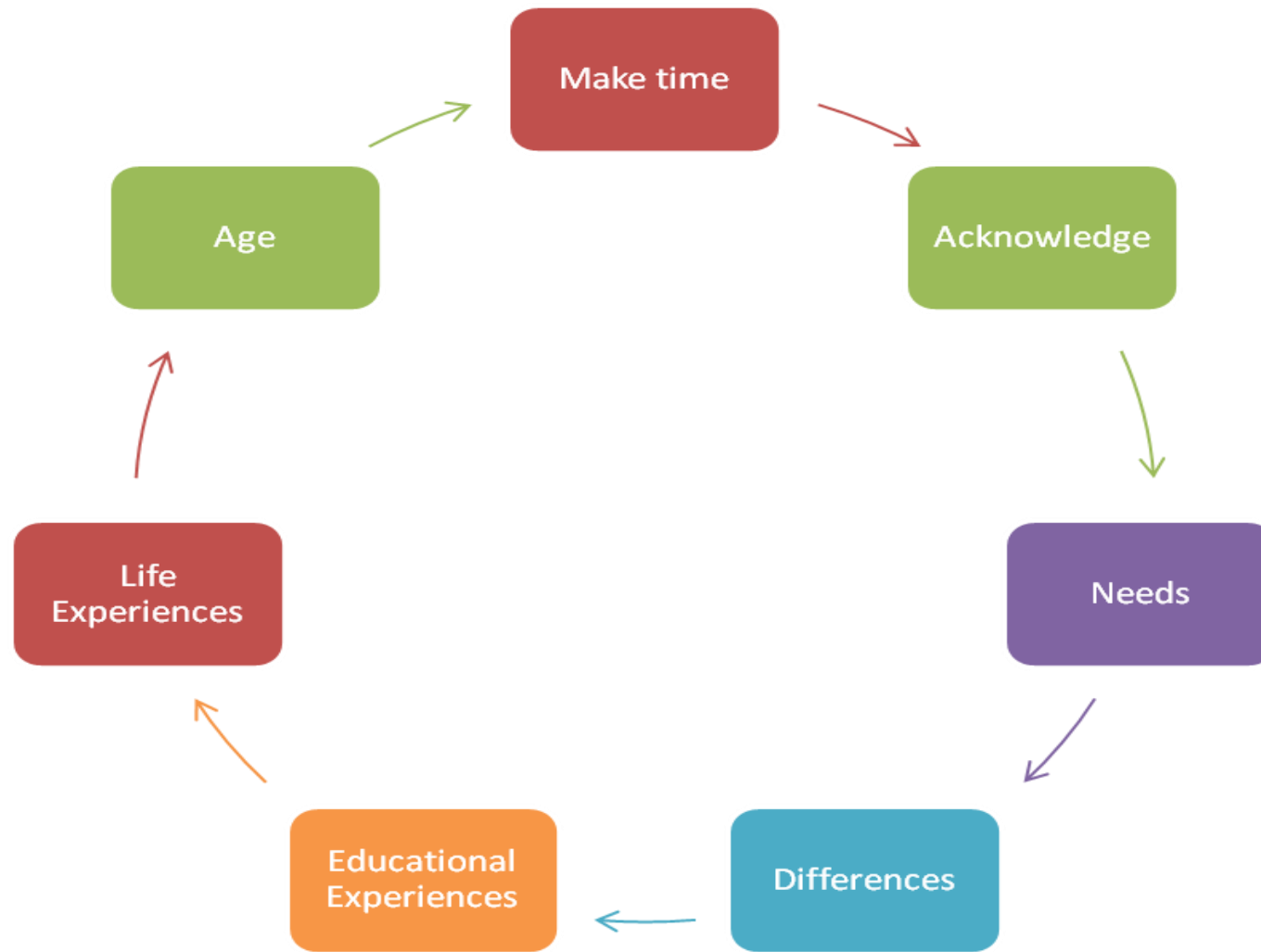
S – structural





# The MANDELA model

- ✓ As a tool for PE's, the MANDELA model has the potential to draw out sensitive and important discussions which enable measured and respectful dialogue.
- ✓ It is a model which encourages power sharing by making time to hear about each other, recognizing and appreciating differences and similarities.
- ✓ Developed in 2012 as a relationship building tool
- ✓ Relationships are at the heart of promoting equality and diversity in practice learning settings.



# The MANDELA model

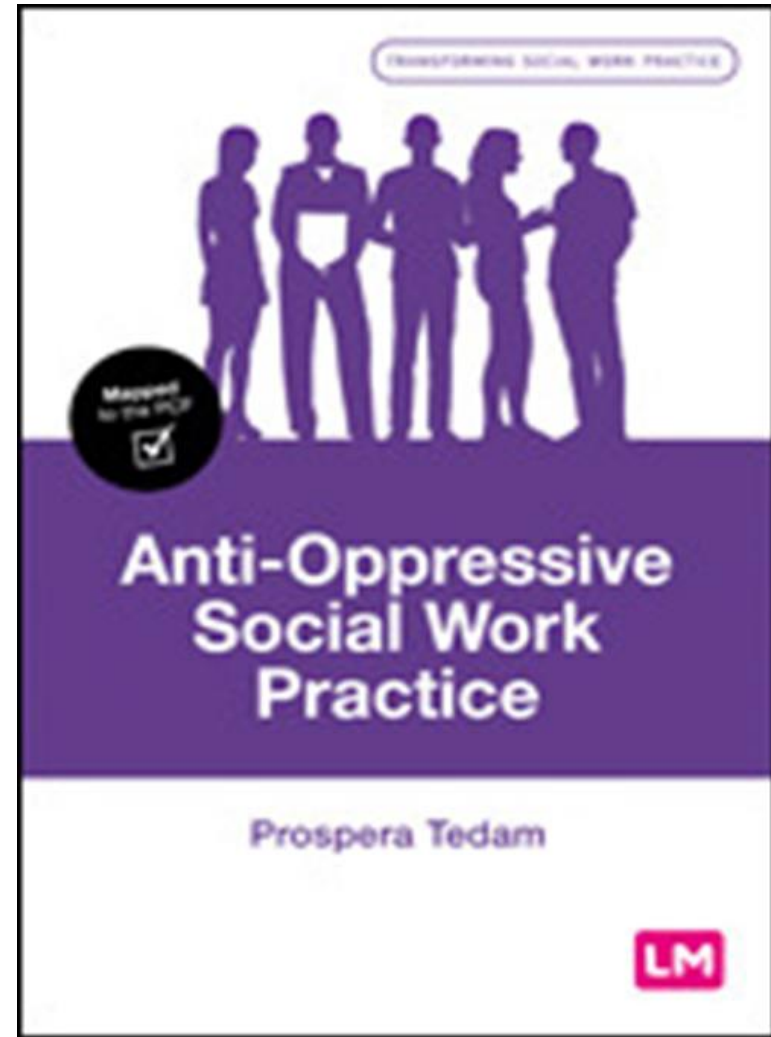
- ✓ **M**ake time (How much time do you have? How much time does your student need? Frequency, pace, timing etc) **where do you make that time in light of Covid- online, phone etc)**
- ✓ **A**cknowledge **N**eeds (Personal, team, organisational, learning needs, covid related needs) **covid related needs, BLM ?**
- ✓ **D**ifferences (Gender, disability, social class, race, sexuality, faith, religion, power etc) **Differences in experience of covid-19 pandemic, lockdown, isolation etc**

# The MANDELA Model

- **E**ducational Experiences (previous, current, type, size, goals, aspirations, value of education, learning preferences, any ongoing Univ work, Covid related educational experiences)
- **L**ife Experiences (ill health, wealth, poverty, childbirth, bereavement, war, relocation, Covid-19)
- **A**ge (Direct or indirect questioning, does age matter, what are the implications, deference? )

# 4D2P Framework

How the framework can assist in addressing and disrupting different forms of oppression and racism.



# Discuss



- ❑ Discussion or dialogue with students, colleagues or service users, friends.
- ❑ What are their concerns, issues experiences?
- ❑ Communicating using non-oppressive language is important
- ❑ During the discussion, you will have to acknowledge your power and privilege, and make a conscious effort not to let that undermine the sincerity of your discussion.
- ❑ It is also during this discussion phase that service users may allude to or directly inform you about their experiences of oppression. Covert oppression may be more difficult to identify, hence the importance of a discussion that is sincere, empathic and open.

# Discover



- If you are a supervisor, you might discover hurt, discontent, experiences of othering, racism, microaggressions emerging from the Discussion.
- Using your listening skills, you are very likely to discover the source or at least an additional stressor for your student, colleague or service user.
- From a person-centered perspective you should ensure you focus on the stressor and its impact on the person you are working with.
- What are (if any) the oppressive features in the service users narrative/experience?

# Decide

- ❑ What exactly is going on?
- ❑ Microaggression? Overt or covert oppression?
- ❑ What kind of oppression is it ( sexism, ableism ,homophobia, classism ageism, racism etc)
- ❑ As social workers, we make decisions on the basis of available evidence- so what evidence have you gathered to inform your decision?



# Disrupt



- The Oxford English Dictionary defines disruption as:  
*'making it difficult for something to continue in the normal way'*
- There is a lot of oppression and oppressive practices which we as social workers have come to normalise over the years.
- If we do not disrupt, then we reproduce.

## For example:

- Disproportionate numbers of Black children who are looked after
- Disproportionate numbers of Black males excluded from school
- Disproportionate numbers of Black males diagnosed with severe mental health problems who are also far more likely to be sectioned under the Mental Health Act.

# Disrupt

- Reproduction of racism occurs daily, if we do nothing to stop or halt it.
- It may feel 'comfortable' to let it slide , turn the other way
- Disrupting is allyship



I make no apology for disrupting.....



# 4D2P & SW Practice

## 4D2P

- Discuss
- Discover
- Decide
- Disrupt

## SW Practice

- Build Rapport/Assess
- Result of assessment
- Analysis and decision
- Intervene/Make better/Improve

Underpinned by ongoing reflection of our own **Power** and **Privilege** (different levels)

# Power

- ✓The possession of authority, control or influence over others
- ✓Power is not equally distributed throughout society.
- ✓As social workers we have power (from our roles, education, and knowledge).
- ✓We can use this power to liberate or to oppress
- ✓See French and Ravens Bases of Power\*

There is a chapter on Power & Powerlessness in the book

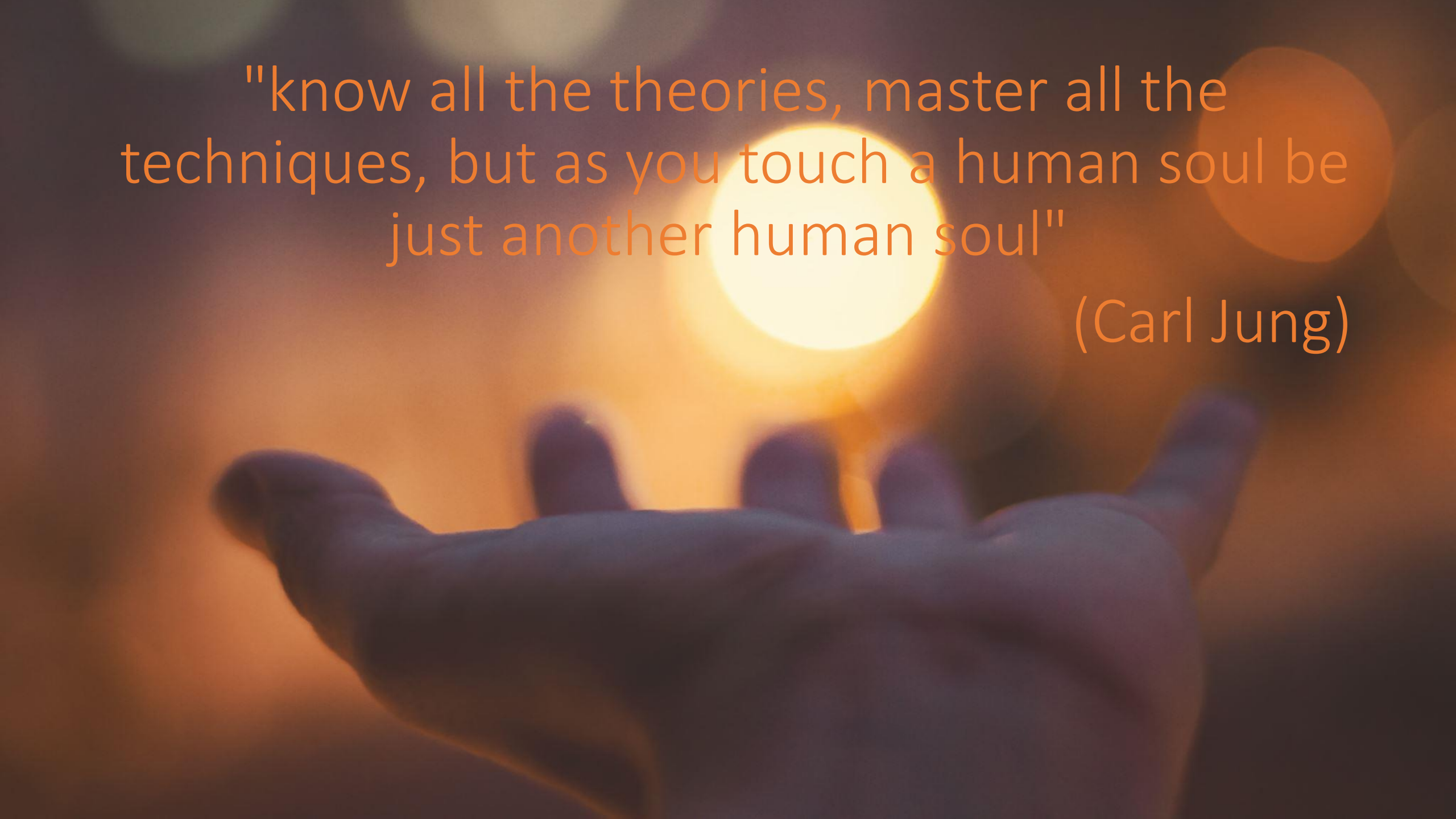
# Privilege

Is a system of advantage or benefit possessed by individuals or groups.

- I purposely avoid the use of 'white' privilege and reserve it for people appropriately positioned to discuss this. I recommend Robin Di'Angelo's work on 'White Fragility' for a deeper understanding.
- I prefer to use 'earned' and 'unearned'

For example:

- **Earned-** High(er) education qualifications (Social Work degree), some titles (eg Dr), job titles etc
- **Unearned-** race/ethnicity, gender

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a glowing, spherical object. The hand is positioned in the lower half of the frame, with fingers slightly curled around the sphere. The sphere is bright and emits a warm, golden light, creating a soft glow. The background is dark and out of focus, featuring several large, circular bokeh lights in shades of orange and yellow, suggesting an indoor setting with warm lighting. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

"know all the theories, master all the techniques, but as you touch a human soul be just another human soul"

(Carl Jung)

A dark blue landscape with a lake and mountains, framed by a black border. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting dusk or dawn. The text 'If This Time' is overlaid in white, bold font.

**'If This Time'**





Joint social action is  
surely...

# DISRUPTING WITH KINDNESS



# My 3 Words....

Hope  
Kindness  
YOU



Concluding  
reflections  
(to think about  
taking your  
learning from  
today forward)

STOP  
START  
CONTINUE

