

SOUTHERNERS ON NEW GROUND
HOW DO WE RELATE?
The Relationships Between Forms of Oppression

Adapted from:
In Our Best Interest,
 Pence, Ellen.
 Minnesota Prog., Inc.,
 1987.

	People of Color	Elders and Youth	Poor People/ Low-income	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people	Undocu-mented Immigrants	Women	People with Disabilities
Isolation	Police abuse us, rarely ever help us. We lose our homes through gentrification . Many neighborhoods are unsafe for us.	High rises become ghettos for Elders. Youth are separated from each other by race and class.	We can only afford low-income housing—are kept away from everyone else. Lack of access to transportation.	Forced to stay closeted at risk of violence. Many neighborhoods are unsafe for us.	We are limited in ability to travel, forced to work jobs under the table, and forced to live in partial hiding at all times	Dominant culture says women need a man for protection. Women out alone are seen as whores, looked down upon.	We are forced into institutions, supposedly separated from other communities for “our own good”.
Emotional Abuse	We are called lazy and stupid, seen as having low morals, our cultures are made invisible.	We are ignored. our ideas are not listened to. We are patronized and made invisible.	We are called lazy and stupid, seen as having low morals. We are blamed for our poverty.	We are seen as having low morals, and as being perverted and sick. We are taunted in public.	We are seen as less than citizens, people who don’t deserve rights of citizens, as intruders to the US	We are seen as stupid and treated as sexual objects. We are seen as virgins or as whores.	We are seen as stupid, assumed to be inferior in physical, mental, and emotional ways.

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Economic Abuse	We are the last to be hired, and the first to be fired. We mostly get poor paying jobs.	We are low priorities for government funding.	Welfare regulations keep us down, because we are poor, the government works to control all aspects of our lives .	Discrimination in employment, lack of benefits for our families.	We are forced to work for terrible wages, long hours and in bad conditions under fear of deportation	We get paid less for the same work, we often do a lot of work we are not paid for—taking care of people emotionally, and childcare.	We are discriminated against in employment, we are denied services we need. We are among the poorest people in this country.
Sexual Abuse	Racism tells us we are either sex-crazed or not sexual at all. We are survivors of racist pornography, and sexual objectification . Police do not protect us from rape. Higher risk for sex trafficking	We are at much higher risk for sexual abuse than adults. When we are abused, we are often told we are lying and not helped. Children are high risk for sex trafficking.	We have little or no police protection from sexual violence. Higher risk for sex trafficking.	We are assumed to be child molesters and sexually sick. Little or no police protection. Our intimate relationships are not seen as being as real or valid as heterosexual ones. Many trans folks are forced into sex work because of being poor	We are not protected against sexual violence at work, and police do not protect us from rape because we fear deportation	We are at high risk for rape, incest, sex trafficking. We are constantly sexually objectified	We are at much higher risk for sexual abuse than people who do not have disabilities. We are told that we can never have healthy sexual relationships because we have disabilities.

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Giving Us Less	We have less access to education, work opportunities, and equal treatment in the court systems.	We are seen as unimportant because many of us do not bring incomes into the house—our contributions are not appreciated.	Middle class values are seen as most important and right. We have less access to education, work opportunities, and equality in the court systems.	Heterosexual relationships are celebrated and seen as normal, our relationships are seen as sick and unimportant, and we are told we are flaunting them when we are open about them.	We pay taxes but we cannot attend many schools, or have access to equal work opportunities or social services. We cannot even fly on a plane without fearing deportation	We are constantly told we are subservient to men, that we exist to serve men. Some religions use their texts to justify our second class status	We are told that we are not fit to make any decisions about our own life, and are denied work and educational opportunities--- all the while being told it is for our own good.
Threats	We are survivors of police brutality, and hundreds of years of terrorism by the white power structure	Threats of violence due to our assumed weakness. Complaints not taken seriously	The government threatens to take our benefits all the time, telling us we are unworthy.	Police brutality, daily threats of violence on the streets	We are threatened with raids by the government and by anti-immigrant vigilante groups	Threatened with labels like 'lesbian', 'slut', and 'bitch' when we do not allow ourselves to be controlled by men or by a society of sexism	Constantly jeered at and harassed for the way our bodies look or the way we are.

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Taking Our Children/ Being Taken from our families	The government takes our children and says that white people would be “more fit” parents	For elders, having children taken because we are ‘too old’ to care for them, for youth not having a voice in where we will live.	Welfare threatens to take our children when we do not do what they want us to do. If there are problems in our homes, we don’t get help solving them—they just take our kids.	We are considered ‘unfit parents’ simply because of our sexuality, our kids can be taken from us at any time.	We constantly live in fear that, though most of us came to the US to give our kids a better life, we will be separated from our kids across national borders. We fear our deportation or theirs.	If we are women who in any way break out of the white, middle class conservative idea of what it means to be a good parent, our children can be taken from us for ‘moral reasons’.	More often than not we are considered ‘unfit parents’, we are rarely offered help with our kids, instead they are just taken away.
Intimidation	Police stops and threats. More arrests.	Many elders fear being out at night, feel that we are easy targets for attacks.	We are not welcome in middle class spaces, threatened if we try to ‘move up’ the class ladder	Homophobia rarely challenged publicly. We are threatened whenever we show pride in who we are.	We are threatened at grocery stores where we can find food from home. We are blamed for US econ. problems	Police will just as likely hurt us as protect us. We are threatened with sexual and physical violence for “acting out”.	We are threatened with having our services taken away when we act anything less than grateful for our second class status in society.
Violence	Genocide, slavery, lynchings, Trail of Tears, torture, ethnic cleansing	Mugging, physical abuse, the brunt of our families’ anger.	Death by lack of health care, world wide deaths from hunger, poverty, and homelessness	Torture, queer bashing, murder, death in concentration camps	We die everyday crossing into US, we are murdered & sold out by smugglers and US authorities	Domestic violence, murder by our batterers and rapists. Bear the brunt of men’s anger	Death in concentration camps, torture in institutions, physical abuse

FOR FACILITATORS USING THE TOOL

- The rationale of Human Rights & Anti-Oppression work is that when some people are oppressed and get treated as LESS than human, *our collective values are poised to protect / affirm / maintain fair and equitable relationships to one another across communities.*
- Why would the lines in the graph be dotted? Could any of the statements for any of the groups fit in a different box? Which ones? Why? What would be an example of a reality discussed for one oppressed group that could be moved to a different box? (Example: People of Color with Disabilities are experiencing all these things at the same time, or “Lack of benefits for our families” under the LGBTQ column could just as easily go under the People of Color or Low-income column)
- Discuss words in bold: **gentrification, sex trafficking, sexual objectification, terrorism**. Ask if anyone in the group know what these terms mean.
- Pull out the **emotional abuse** column (in bold) to use as an example of how many similarities persist in the ways that oppression plays out, while at the same time acknowledging to the group how different oppressions are from each other—find an opportunity to ask the group about the differences between forms.
 - What’s an example of a difference?
 - How does it play out?
 - Is it hard to believe that it “really is that bad” for groups that we are not part of? What could that be about?
 - **What could be at risk if we do see oppressions as inter-connected?**
 - **What could be at risk if we don’t see them as connected?**

Have questions, need support or technical assistance on this tool?
Contact us at ignite@southernersonnewground.org or 404-549-8628

