



# Power and Privilege: Two Columns

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Use this exercise to encourage participants to think about their own power and privilege. The objective of this activity is to identify the elements that contribute to our identity that are not a matter of our own choosing. We are born into particular situations in diverse social circumstances.

## Directions:

1. Explain the objective of the activity to the participants. (5 mns)
2. Distribute the Power and Privilege worksheet (below) to each participant and explain that for each row they must choose the option on the left or the right column that best describes who they are or how they identify. Participants must do this individually (5 mns)
3. Discuss each item on the worksheet. Encourage people to share as much as they feel comfortable with (20 mns)
  - Which of the two answers has more power in our society?
  - Did anyone have any realizations or thoughts about the item being discussed?
4. After discussing each item, discuss the overall results with the participants (20 mns)
  - What struck you about this exercise or about the aspects you circled?
  - Does anything about this sheet make you uncomfortable?
  - How could these aspects of one's identity cause someone to have more or less power or privilege than others?
  - What aspects of power and privilege do we hold as a group that may affect our interactions with farm workers and immigrants?
  - In what ways might we be able to anticipate these manifesting themselves?
  - Can you think of other categories that could be added to the worksheet?



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## Power and Privilege Worksheet

Instructions: In each horizontal row, circle the label from either column 1 or 2 with which you would *most* identify.

Column 1	Column 2
Over 30	Under 30
Caucasian	Non-Caucasian
Heterosexual male	Non-heterosexual male
Middle or upper class	Working class
Heterosexual	Gay, bisexual, transgender, Queer
Able-bodied	Person with a disability
Generally very healthy	Have lots of health complications
English is your first language	English is not your first language
Literate	Non-literate
Born in the U.S.	Born outside of the U.S.
Family predominantly holds white-collar jobs	Family predominantly holds blue-collar jobs
Grew up in a home with clean, running water & electricity	Grew up in a home <i>without</i> clean, running water & electricity
College educated	Not college educated
Have always had access to adequate medical care	Have been forced to go without adequate medical care
Have access to information and communications tools (e.g. phone, internet)	Do not have access to information and communications tools (e.g. phone, internet)
Christian	Non-Christian
Fit beauty stereotype	Does not fit beauty stereotype
US citizen	Non-US citizen
Traditional family structure (one mom, one dad)	Non-traditional family structure

**Power is the ability to do or act. The more access to resources one has, the more options one has. Many of these groups to which you belong were probably not chosen by you; rather, they were determined by the context into which you were born and they may provide you with privilege, and therefore power. Power differences are expressed in institutional and cultural contexts, in both direct and indirect ways, and form the basis of our interpersonal relationships.**