



RESOURCES FOR

*everyday*

ANTI-OPPRESSIVE  
PRACTICES

**2.0**

Compiled & Edited by:  
Hayley Francis Cann, BMT,NMT, MTA

# Contents

---

**Editor's Address.....pg.2**

## LEARN

**About anti-oppressive Practice.....pg.3**

**Bias and Privilege.....pg.4**

**Actions & Intentions (for your "oops" moments).....pg.5**

**AOP in helping professions.....pg.7**

**Podcast Episodes.....pg.8**

**Youtube Music Videos on AOP subjects.....pg.9**

**TEDx Talks.....pg.10**

**Additional Resources.....pg.11**

## REFLECT

**Develop your WHY.....pg.14**

**Reflections & Writing prompts.....pg.15**

## ACT

**Where to go next?.....pg.18**

**Set tangible goals.....pg.19**

**Editor's Notes.....pg. 20**

To Our Community,

Almost a year later and I am honoured to know that more therapists, allied professionals, friends, and family members have embraced the important discussions around anti-oppressive philosophy. In alignment with the principle of cultural humility, it is important that we continue to learn and grow. It is important that we build upon the knowledge we have gained in the past year and integrate it into our everyday practices.

The work is not finished! Still, we are seeing acts of hatred and violence toward marginalized communities. Still, we are seeing slow progress toward justice for victims of hate crimes and publicly racist executions. Still, we are working to educate our brothers, sisters, friends, family members, communities, nations... on the importance of humility, equity, and diversity. Still, we are called to reflect and act!

The material in this resource is designed to challenge your level of comfort. It is designed to make you reflect on the tough questions. It is designed to keep you from becoming stagnant in your pursuit of an anti-oppressive lifestyle.

If you are easily triggered by sensitive content relating to social injustice, please make sure you take the proper precautions to self-care before proceeding.

Thank you for taking this step to engage in the directives and exercises within this resource. Thank you for doing your part to make this world a more equitable place!

In strength & solidarity,

Hayley

# About Anti-Oppressive Practice

## Where did this philosophy originate?

Derek Clifford is a social worker, educator, and early pioneer in anti-oppressive practices who was informed by the writings of black feminist and other non-dominant perspectives when he created a definition of 'Anti-oppressive' in 1995. He asserts that Anti-oppressive is a position that constructs social divisions as matters of broad social structure, and looks at the use and abuse of power in relation to broader social structures.

Since that point, more literature has explored this concept of anti-oppressive practice:

- Anti-oppressive music therapy: updates and future considerations (Baines, 2021)
- Anti-oppressive practice (Burke & Harrison, 1998)
- Anti-oppressive ethics and values in social work (Clifford & Burke, 2008)
- Considering the ways in which anti-oppressive practice principles can inform health research (Baines & Edwards, 2015)
- Deprofessionalizing Social Work: Anti-Oppressive Practice, Competencies and Postmodernism (Dominelli, 1996)
- Emerging perspectives on anti-oppressive practice (Wes, 2003)

...and more! (see AOP resources on pgs. **7-13**)

## What does it mean to be anti-oppressive?

"Anti-oppressive practice involves recognising power imbalances and working toward the promotion of change to redress the balance of power. This includes actively preventing, challenging and ending oppression against other people (anti-racism, anti-sexism, anti-heterosexism, anti-ableism, anti-ageism, and an understanding of class oppression)" (Dalrymple & Burke, 1995).

Learn more about anti-oppressive practice ([here](#)).

# Bias & Privilege

## How do we develop bias?

An implicit bias (or implicit social cognition) is an unconscious association, belief, or attitude toward any social group. Due to implicit biases, people may often attribute certain qualities or characteristics to all members of a particular group, a phenomenon known as **stereotyping**.

We learn about this in psychology! This happens because **1)** we tend to seek out patterns to better make sense of our world, **2)** we like to simplify social concepts in response to the complexity that exists all around us (in other words, we choose to believe what is easy, what is most comfortable), & **3)** experience and social conditioning play a role.

Implicit biases are influenced by experiences. Although these attitudes may not be the result of direct personal experience, cultural conditioning, media portrayals, and upbringing can all contribute to the implicit associations that people form about the members of other social groups.

## What do we mean by privilege? Who has it?

**Privilege** is an unearned benefit given to members of mainstream dominant groups. These advantages are not based on efforts or qualifications.

Privilege does **not** mean that one's life has not been challenging or difficult. It means that members of the dominant group received a head start in life for simply existing as part of that group. For example: Privilege doesn't mean that ALL white people are racists. It means that they are the favoured or protected group of people within our society. Similarly, privilege does not mean that ALL heterosexual individuals are homophobic. It means, they are the favoured or protected group of people within our society. It does not mean that ALL men are sexist. It means that they have been given certain advantages based on gender dominance; a qualification they did not work to achieve.

## How can I be more aware of my biases?

- [The danger of the single story \(Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie\)](#)
- [Public Transit Visualization \(Artful Anti-Oppression, page 13\)](#)
- [Check your privilege \(Four Steps\)](#)
- [Privilege Exercises](#)

# Actions & Intentions

(for your "oops" moments)

---

## What happens when we unintentionally offend someone?

Sometimes the impact of our words or actions are taken out of context, misinterpreted, or just flat out wrong! This can be an uncomfortable situation. Our instinct might be to feel embarrassed or get defensive however, this is where the concept of **cultural humility** comes into play.

*The National Institutes of Health (NIH)* defines Cultural Humility as "a lifelong process of self-reflection and self-critique whereby the individual not only learns about another's culture, but one starts with an examination of her/his/their own beliefs and cultural identities."

Similarly, *The First Nations Health Authority* defines Cultural Humility as "a process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural Humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience."

There's a framework for cultural safety and humility developed by the first nations health authority that beautifully lays out these interconnections of relationships. The part I love the most is that it always starts with us...

#ItStartsWithMe!

[\[click here to access the framework\]](#)

# Actions & Intentions Cont'd

## (for your "oops" moments)

So, when conflicts arise (or situations of discomfort come about) it is important to **continue to be a learner**. Check-in with yourself about **WHY** you are responding a certain way. If your words or actions are met with an impact you did not intend there are a set of actions I would like you to remember:

The first is to **pause**, if you can, and not act in an emotionally charged state. Then, I would ask you to move through what I call the **3 A's to maintain cultural humility and override discomfort...**

1. **Assume responsibility** for your actions. Take ownership for the things you did or said.
2. **Acknowledge and validate** that you caused someone or a group of people to feel differently than you had intended.
  - a. **Apologize** for harm caused if that's what the situation requires of you.
3. **Ask questions**. Continue to be a learner and maintain the principle of cultural humility. When you maintain this ongoing learning, also remember to **listen, listen, listen**. This is important if you want to see progress or any kind of positive outcome.

### Example:

Rachel unintentionally offended a group of people after reposting a thread on Facebook that she initially felt was helpful. In response to the backlash, Rachel should:

- **(Assume Responsibility)** - "I posted something that I felt was helpful, but after listening and reading the responses I can see that I missed the mark."
- **(Acknowledge and validate)** - "I am saddened that people were hurt by my actions and I am learning from all of the feedback."
- **(Ask questions)** - "What can I do to help remedy the hurt I have caused? How do I start promoting the most equitable message?"

**Please note:** We won't get it right all of the time, but being willing to learn and act from a place of humility rather than hostility, defensiveness, or defeat will lead us in the right direction. One where we learn to override discomfort.

# AOP in Helping Professions

## Current Literature

- [A Call for Radical Imagining: Exploring Anti-Blackness in the Music Therapy Profession](#) (Norris, 2020)
- [An Anti-Oppression Framework for Child Welfare in Ontario](#) (Wong & Yee, 2010)
- [Anti-Oppressive Practice](#) (Curry-Stevens, 2016)
- [Anti-oppressive Practice](#) (Dalrymple & Burke, 2019)
- [Anti-oppressive music therapy: Updates and future considerations.](#) (Baines, 2021)
- [Anti-Oppressive Practice and Reflexive Lifeworld-Led Approaches to Care: A Framework for Teaching Nurses About Social Justice](#) (Hutchison, 2015)
- [Cultural intersections in music therapy](#) (2017)
- [Experiencing Race as a Music Therapist: Personal Narratives](#) (Hadley, 2003)
- [How to navigate cultural appropriations in a globalized music world?](#) (2020)
- [It's Not What's Done, But Why It's Done: Music Therapists' Understanding of Normalisation, Maximisation and the Neurodiversity Movement](#) (Pickard et al., 2020)
- [Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning: Best Practices in Music Therapy](#) (Whitehead-Pleaux et al., 2012)
- [Music Therapy as an Anti-Oppressive Practice](#) (Baines, 2013)
- [Music Therapy and Cultural Diversity](#) (Kim & Whitehead-Pleaux, 2015)
- [Music Therapy in a multicultural context](#) (Belgrave & Kim, 2020)
- [Reflection and Accountability: Towards Acknowledging and Dismantling Oppressive Structures](#) (Ghetti, 2020)
- [Toward a Queer Music Therapy: The Implications of Queer Theory for Radically Inclusive Music Therapy](#) (Grzanka et al., 2016)



# Podcast Episodes

More and more podcasts have started exploring topics related to anti-oppressive practices. It is wonderful to see so many marginalised voices being heard and part of the greater conversation. Here are a few episodes that have made an impact on me (in no particular order):

- **"Becoming an imperfect ally"** with guest Erica Courdae (Episode #318, *Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast* with Amy Porterfield)
- **"Well, that escalated quickly"** with guest Franchesca Ramsey (*Marie Forleo Podcast*, [click here for transcript](#))
- **"How Toxic Positivity Props Up White Supremacy"** (*Feminist Visionaries Podcast* with Meaghan Lamm)
- **"Music of hate, music for healing"** with guest Dr. Ted Ficken (*Voices of Music Therapy Podcast* with Brian Locascio)
- **"Brave Spaces"** with guest Sarah Bell (*Able Voice Podcast* with Hayley and Kim)
- **"Equity, ADHD, and 3e"** with guest Colin Seale (*The Neurodiversity Podcast* with Emily Kircher-Morris)
- **"Valuing Neurodiversity: how society needs to change"** with guests Penny Andrews and Georgia Harper (Episode #63, *Reasons to be cheerful Podcast* with Ed Miliband and Geoff Lloyd)
- **"How Can We Raise The Bar On Trans Rights?"** with Lui Asquith (*Getting Curious* with Jonathan Van Ness)
- **"The fundamentals of anti-oppression"** with guest Rania El Mugammar (*Small Non-Profit Podcast*)
- **"The Pandemic, Leadership and Access to Music Therapy"** with guests Joel Klassen and Kiki Chang (Episode #7, *Canadian Music Therapy Podcast*)
- **"Conversations around Equitable, Anti-Racist, and Anti-Oppressive Practice"** (Various episodes, *TDSB Human Library Podcast*)
- **"Interviews with social workers, educators, and activists"** (Full Podcast, *Doin' the work: Frontline stories of social change Podcast*)

Again, these are episodes that have been valuable to me and my learning. Please take this as your permission slip to explore more and share with your networks and communities.

# Youtube Music Videos

**Please Note:** *The following songs, and associated videos, may contain harsh language and/or scenes of violence. The music included in this list is an artistic expression and interpretation of the artists' reality.*

- "1st World Tragedy" - Connie Constance
- "A Change Is Gonna Come" - Sam Cooke
- "A Beautiful Noise" - Alicia Keys and Brandi Carlile
- "Black" - Dave
- "Burn your village to the ground" - A Tribe Called Red (ATCR)
- "Changes" - Tupac Shakur
- "Do something" - Matthew West
- "Everyone Is Gay" - A Great Big World
- "Fire in the Rain" - National Council of Social Service
- "I can't breathe" - H.E.R
- "I wish I knew how it would feel to be free" - Nina Simone
- "Let me shine" - Prior's Court
- "March March" - The Chicks
- "Redemption Song" - Bob Marley & The Wailers
- "Same Love" - Macklemore & Ryan Lewis (ft. Mary Lambert)
- "Sorry Not Everybody Is You" - Ron Gallo
- "Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women" - Martin Sisters
- "The Warriors" - SNOTTY NOSE REZ KIDS

# TEDx Talks

- [A Journey of Discovery, Truth and Reconciliation](#) | Cecelia Reekie
- [Changing The Way We Talk About Disability](#) | Amy Oulton
- [Disability and work: Let's stop wasting talent](#) | Hannah Barham-Brown
- [Dismantling Microaggressions Through the Power of Connection](#) | Toya Webb
- [Faith in a Science Driven World](#) | Rabbi Yaakov Glasman
- [I'm not a stereotype. I'm that Jew.](#) | Eitan Chitayat
- [Indigenous In Plain Sight](#) | Gregg Deal
- [I've lived as a man & a woman -- here's what I learned](#) | Paula Stone Williams
- [Neurodiversity is a super power not a problem](#) | Elaine Halligan
- [No. You Cannot Touch My Hair!](#) | Mena Fombo
- [Queer & Muslim: Nothing to Reconcile](#) | Blair Imani
- [Own Your Behaviours, Master Your Communication, Determine Your Success](#) | Louise Evans
- [The danger of a single story](#) | Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- [The prison of your mind](#) | Sean Stephenson
- [Toilets, bowties, gender and me](#) | Audrey Mason-Hyde
- ['We the People' - the three most misunderstood words in US history](#) | Mark Charles
- [What I am learning from my white grandchildren -- truths about race](#) | Anthony Peterson
- [What I've learned from having balls](#) | Emily Quinn

# Additional Resources

## Acknowledging Indigenous maltreatment:

- [BCPSQC Program Sub-Topic: Cultural Safety & Humility Action Series](#)
- Fleras, Augie. (2017). Unequal Relations: An introduction to race, ethnic and Aboriginal dynamics in Canada. Eighth Edition. Toronto: Pearson.
- Joseph, Bob. (2018). 21 things you may not know about the Indian Act. B.C., Port Coquitlam: Indigenous Relations Press.
- Vowel, Chelsea. (2016). Indigenous writes: A guide to First Nations, Metis and Inuit issues in Canada. Winnipeg: Highwater Press.
- [Storying Violence](#) (Starblanket & Hunt, 2020)
- [We will stand up](#) | CBC (2020)

## Anti-Racism:

- Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre | [www.aclrc.com](http://www.aclrc.com)
- [Celebrating Viola Desmond](#) | CNN
- The Canadian Race Relations Foundation | [www.crrf-fcrr.ca](http://www.crrf-fcrr.ca)
- Jewell, T. & Durand, A. (Illustrator). (2020). This book is anti-racist: 20 lessons on how to wake up, take action and do the work. MN: Frances Lincoln Children's Books.
- Lorenzetti, Liza & Jacob, Andre. (2018). White privilege: Racism, anti-racism and changing oppressive social structures. In David Este, Liza Lorenzetti & Christa Sato (eds.). Racism and anti-racism in Canada. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.
- [Equity, Inclusion and Representation in Music Therapy](#)

## Learning about Jewish Culture & Anti-Semitism:

- Learn more about Jewish culture | [www.myjewishlearning.com](http://www.myjewishlearning.com)
- Learn more about the Holocaust | [www.yadvashem.com](http://www.yadvashem.com)
- [Address and Challenge Anti-Semitism](#)
- [Caring for Holocaust survivors and survivors of other traumatic events at the end of life](#)
- [Music Therapy To Sever the Silence of a Childhood Holocaust or the Silence of a Childhood Holocaust Survivor](#) (Clements-Cortes, 2012)
- [Manual for caring for Holocaust survivors](#) | Baycrest

# Additional Resources

## Cultural Appropriation:

- [7 Ways of 'Honoring' Other Cultures That Are Really Just Cultural Appropriation](#)
- [The Difference Between Cultural Exchange and Cultural Appropriation](#)
- [World music and Cultural Knowledge: avoiding the obstacles of tokenism](#) (pages 17-19)

## Neurodiversity:

- Learn more about neurodiversity | [www.neurodiversityhub.org](http://www.neurodiversityhub.org)
- Neurodiversity Network | [www.neurodiversitynetwork.net](http://www.neurodiversitynetwork.net)
- Neurodiversity Resources | [www.differentbrains.org](http://www.differentbrains.org)
- What you need to know | [www.understood.org](http://www.understood.org)
- [Navigating Adulthood and IDD](#) | Podcast
- [The Children's Right to Music Project](#) | Curtis & Vaillancourt

## Pro-Love:

- [Bill passed in Canada to ban conversion therapy \(2021\)](#)
- [LGBTQ+ Resources](#)
- [Marriage Equality](#)
- [Queer Love in Color](#)
- [Beyond Diversity: An LGBT Best Practice Guide for Employers](#)

## Learning Tools

- [9 meaningful ways to apologize](#) (Lee Mun Wah, 2020)
- [Intervention Expansion and Inspiration: Early Childhood, Autism, and IDD](#)
- [Disability Culture and Neurodiversity in our Music Therapy Practice with Adults with IDD](#)
- [Therapeutic Relationships & Inclusive Spaces](#)

# Additional Resources

Please use this page as an open space and invitation to add resources that you find helpful along your learning journey. Share these resources with your networks and set an accountability measure for yourself to keep adding to this list:

# Develop your WHY

Thank you for making the conscious decision to learn more about anti-oppressive practices.

*"In a world that can seem so aggressive, confrontational, and dangerous, you should know that you have the power to change it."*

- Meghan Markle

So, how do we change it? What steps need to be taken? In this section I ask you to sit with the knowledge you have learned and reflect on the way this could inform your practice and future actions.

## Consider the following:

- Why is developing an anti-oppressive approach important to you?
- How can we provide support to clients who may experience types of oppression that we have not experienced ourselves?
- Are there groups of clients/client communities you feel the least comfortable working with? Why?
- If you are in a position of power, what do your hiring practices look like? Are you seeking out diverse voices and perspectives? Are we accepting diverse groups of people into our university programs? Are these programs accessible to marginalized communities?
- In what areas are you promoting your services? Do you provide information to persons from lower income communities on ways to access your services? Are your clinical spaces accessible?

# Reflections & Writing Prompts

Use the following scenarios and prompts to inspire deeper thought through conversations, journaling, or however you best process:

## **Scenario #1**

*You are a young-adult female with Indigenous roots and visibly present as a POC. You are working in long-term care with older adults, that mostly identify as white and catholic. You are mindful of the possibility that the generational difference may contribute to views heavily rooted in discrimination, consciously or unconsciously from the individual's you are working with. You arrive for a 1:1 session with an older gentleman who recalls his time working for the Canadian government. This is the first time you are meeting and he refers to working with "your kind of people" at multiple points throughout the session! Saying things like... "Politics. Politics. I don't know why everyone got so upset. We were only trying to help you to be more like us. I guess you didn't want our help! But, that's okay. I like you! What are we going to do? Are we going to do some drumming together?"*

Reflect on the following:

1. Who is experiencing oppression? (The Therapist or The client)
2. How do we maintain the safety of both parties and respect this client's right to autonomy?

## **Reflection Questions**

- How can we work to redress the balance of power within our workspaces and communities?
- What is one positive change you wish to see within our field? What is one action step you can take to work toward this change?
- What is the balance between redressing power and being the expert within the therapeutic relationship?
- What biases do I bring into the therapy space? How can I be congruent in my lived experience and honour the differences of others? Is this possible?



# Reflection Space



# Reflection Space



# Where to go next?

## **Music Therapy Community:**

[AMTA Code of Ethics](#)

[Black Music Therapy Network Address](#)

[CAMT Code of Ethics](#)

[CAMT Position Statements](#)

[British Association of Music Therapy Diversity Report \(2020\)](#)

## **Social Campaigns:**

[Black Lives Matter: Home](#)

[Downie Wenjack Fund](#)

[Every name's a story | Starbucks](#)

[Human Rights Campaign](#)

[Orange Shirt Society](#)

## **History:**

[A History of Racism in America](#)

[Prejudice and discrimination in Canada](#)

## **Courses:**

[Anti-racism training | Diversity and Resiliency](#)

[Building an Anti-Oppressive Practice \(12 CMTEs, 3 for ethics\)](#)

[MT-PC Pod-Courses](#)

[Race and #RealTalk - halo\\_inc\\_barbershop](#)

# Set Tangible Goals

Make no mistake. You are here for a reason! You have special gifts, talents, experiences, and abilities that you can use to make life more equitable for the people around you. Let's tune in to these to determine a clear and unique call to action.

Here we use our resources, abilities, and influence to determine your next course of action. ([Click here to download & complete the worksheet](#)).

After taking stock, finish the following thoughts:

I think \_\_\_\_\_,

I feel \_\_\_\_\_,

I wonder \_\_\_\_\_,

I'm deciding \_\_\_\_\_,

Therefore, I \_\_\_\_\_.

Now, let's lean into this acknowledgment to set tangible action steps. ([Click here to download & complete the goal setting worksheet](#)).

Whatever your call to action (CTA) becomes, it will be unique to you and your experiences, your hopes, dreams, interests, and passions for learning.

*"You may not have the loudest voice, the strongest voice, or the wisest voice,  
But you have an able voice that can and should be heard."*

*"So, use your voice for equity, diversity, humility,  
Because you have an able voice that can and should be heard."*

\*(Chant from the LOUD program facilitated by Hayley Francis Cann)

# Thank you

*"Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and the test of our civilization."*

—Mahatma Gandhi

Thank you for your courage and willingness to learn about anti-oppressive approaches to practice. Please share this resource with your colleagues, family, and friends so that we can work toward the collective goal of equitable treatment for all.

Please do not hesitate to connect with me if you have questions or resources that you would like to share and add to this developing list.

I can be contacted at [mtahayley@gmail.com](mailto:mtahayley@gmail.com) or [contactsynergymt@gmail.com](mailto:contactsynergymt@gmail.com).