

Video Transcript: Impact with Integrity - Module 2, Lesson 4

Hey, welcome back. I'm so glad you're here. Now we're going to embrace our societal or positional power. And by that, it's going to be different for every single person who's taking this course. And that just is what it is, but we would be kind of irresponsible not to be thoughtful and mindful about this. And so, if you've got a whole bunch of power, then I'm going to kind of push you a little bit, to be thoughtful about not stepping all over people. And if you're where you're more junior in the chain of command, or where your identities are more oppressed and marginalized by the society that you live in, then I'm not going to say don't do something, because that's not for me to decide that's for you to decide. And we'll do that in the last lesson of this module.

And, listen, I probably don't even need to tell you this, right? You have more risk involved in taking action in some ways, than maybe someone who has more societal positional power. And, and it's important to face into that and you still get to make a choice, right? And, so, I'm not here to talk anybody into or out of making a choice or doing something. I'm here to just hold up for you, these are the things I think through. And if it's helpful for you to think through these things, as you make your decision, I hope, I'm glad to share it with you.

So, we'll start with societal power. The social justice training Institute has this fabulous worksheet, that we've reproduced with their permission, that lists a whole range of different forms of identity. There were these interesting complex kaleidoscopes of identities, right?

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So, I am white, right? I identify as a white person in the United States. The world sees me as white, right? All those things, there's congruence. And there's a whole host of stuff that I experienced in the world as a white person that's different than someone who's, say, a black person or indigenous person or a Latina woman. Right. I have different experiences. I'm treated differently. I see the world differently. I've been socialized to see the world differently. And, it's bringing that to my awareness. I'm also gender nonconforming. Like, what is this? Right? Like, I go to get a men's haircut. And, I don't really associate very clearly, for me with either gender binary. I'm just kinda me, is how I feel. And, our society is, like, we're not sure what to do with that. It's a little bit kind of hip and cool right now. All the young kids are doing it. But really, most of my life, I've kind of been like, you know, waiting for the shoe to drop for that aspect of my identity. Right? So, it's not that it's one size fits all, or you're going to be all oppressed or all privileged. We have different...some of you might be...but, most of us have this kind of confluence of different variables. And, and it can even change from context to context where in one context, you experience a lot of oppression, but that same thing, that results in oppression in another context can be something that's really honored and received, in some ways even a privilege. Okay. So we're in a global world now. It just can change from place to place. I'm mostly steeped in the U S context. So I can speak from that context.

But, even everything I see and can speak to is through a lens of my own socialization, predominantly as a white person in the United States. So, knowing that that informs my latitude. How much I can do and what risks there are to me for doing so.

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So, all I want to ask you to do in this lesson is just face into it. Whatever it is. Okay. So this Social Justice Training Institute worksheet lists these various identities and just says, this is what tends to be marginalized and this is what tends to be privileged. And, I just want you to go through and be like, "Oh yes, this, no, that, yes, this, no, that," and just have a sense of like, "Oh, I didn't even think about my age." Listen, we're all going to experience agism if we live long enough, right? So, that's when we all get to get to. And, so, what is it? And more of a sense of, it's not like there's a score or anything like that. It's just bringing into your awareness. "Oh, wow. I actually have privilege in this area. Oh, wow. I have experienced marginalization in this area." And the totality of that. And, I have some reflection questions for you around, what's your experience of that? And how is that informing how you feel...the risks you feel willing and able to take. So, please download that worksheet, print it out, and do that on your own time. And, whatever insights and ahas come to you, yay. Let's go for that.

The other one is positional power. So again, likewise, please download it, print it out. And that one is pretty straightforward. It just kind of asks you, of the people involved in the challenge you're facing, just draw a simple org chart and circle where you are. Are you at the top or the bottom of the food chain or somewhere in the middle in a more matrix organization? Sometimes the biggest challenges we have are with our peers where we technically have the same amount of authority but we have some challenges working things out. So, whatever it is, it is. I just want to ask you to face into that. And to begin facing into and thinking and reflecting on your own. "Okay, how are the risks on evenly distributed in my context?" And, if I have positional power, if I have societal power, then let's use that to make good, positive change in the world that advances love and justice.

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And, if I have less of that, that doesn't mean you don't use it. You got what you got. Right? And, so what can you use if you choose to advance love, healing, justice, light...all the things that we all love and care about that brings us all together as part of this community. Okay? So I offer this with some, I guess, with some humility, because it's not that we know the answers. I just think they're helpful questions to ask and they're ways to check ourselves, If we have the privilege. And, there are ways to take a deep breath and like, "do I want to do something?" And, in the book that I wrote, I talk about, there's some times I chose to do something, some times I chose not to. And that's okay, too. We're going to talk about that in the next lesson. All right. So happy facing into, and embracing ,your positional and societal power. Or lack thereof, whatever the case may be.

And I will see you in the next lesson.