

Self-Assessment of Culture in Regard to Privilege: Hot Spots, Hidden Spots, and Soft Spots

- **Hot Spots:** understandably strong emotion associated with an identity around which you have experienced oppression.
- **Hidden Spots:** lack of awareness of relevant information regarding others’ experiences and behaviors because of unexamined assumptions related to your privilege.
- **Soft Spots:** differential expectations for others who hold oppressed identities (often through lowered expectations), due to unexamined assumptions about their experiences and/or over-identification due to a shared background.

Commonly identified dimensions of culture and identity	Up side of power/privilege (+)	Down side of power/privilege (-)	Neutral “Are you sure?” (/)	Mixed power (+/-)	Unsure (?)
Social class					
Sexual orientation					
Gender identity					
Ability					
Education level					
Body type/size					
Geographic origin					
Veteran status					
Race					
Ethnicity					
Age					
Religion					
Profession					
Experience of violence					
Substance use					
Other:					

Identifying your own hot spots, hidden spots, and soft spots:

- **(+) Up side of power/privilege** = your experiences in this dimension have given you power and privilege compared to others; this may predispose you to a HIDDEN SPOT or, under certain circumstances, a SOFT SPOT
- **(-) Down side of power/privilege** = your experiences in this dimension have exposed you to marginalization, oppression, and/or lack of privilege compared to others; this may predispose you to a HOT SPOT or, if these experiences/identities are shared with your client, a SOFT SPOT
- **(/) Neutral** = your experiences in this dimension have been neutral regarding power and privilege compared to others
- **(-/+ Mixed power** = your experiences in this dimension have given you power and privilege compared to some, and exposed you to lack of privilege compared to others; this may lead you to inconsistent reactions
- **(?) Unsure** = you are uncertain about where your power/privilege status is in this dimension