

## Tool 20: Drawing the intersection in supervision

**This tool facilitates exploration in supervision about your supervisee's intersectional experiences and the emotional support they need.**

This tool enables supervision to be a space where the supervisor recognises that the personal intersects with the professional in the supervisee's practice. It examines how positions of identity and context are at the heart of equitable practice.

The metaphor of an intersection helps us to think about the pressure that a practitioner experiences because of the roads and traffic they experience personally and professionally. The idea of compound injury in an intersection applies to the intersection of competing demands and stressors on practitioners.

An important outcome is to empower practitioners to be confident in asserting intersectional curiosity in their day-to-day practice, including interprofessional meetings where advocacy and representation should be founded on an intersectional analysis.



**Work together through the four tasks below.** These tasks are actions that map the intersections of location and directional forces of power. While the focus of the tasks is on oppression, the tasks can be applied to analyse advantage, strength and opportunity.

Here, naming the roads and vehicles of being in the intersection not only helps an understanding of the compound injuries, but also enables you to think about how to be positioned to reduce injury. In this frame, the ideas of risk, protection, safeguarding and strengths-based approaches take account of protective factors that not only lessen the impact of oppression, but also draw out locations of empowerment and solidarity.

## 1: Name the roads of social inequality and how they criss-cross

Take a piece of paper and place the supervisee in the middle. Draw the roads that meet at the crossroads where they are standing.

The roads of social inequality are overlapping macro structures, such as:

- > ableism
- > ageism
- > capitalism
- > caste
- > class
- > colonialism
- > heteronormativity
- > imperialism
- > patriarchy
- > racism
- > sexism
- > trans/homophobia.

Roads of inequality include work structures and dominant ideas. The intersecting roads of inequality map out the forces that impact on the individual. This focuses attention on the wider landscape and situates the problem in the contexts that people inhabit, rather than the individual.

## 2: Name the vehicles of oppression on the roads of social inequality

Name the vehicles on the different roads.

The vehicles on the roads of social inequality are the mechanisms that drive oppression and discrimination. For example, vehicles of racism include language, attitudes and behaviours. Vehicles of oppression include strategies that silence or undermine people, such as exclusion and silencing. Here, intersectional reflection prompts analysis of the specific forms of power, while building a picture of the impact of being simultaneously hit by multiple forces of power.

## 3: Describe the crash/collision at the intersection

Describe why and how the vehicles are crashing into the person.

Here, analysis of the crash exposes why and how vehicles of oppression are reckless. This includes the vehicles of organisational culture, where dangerous driving could arise from privilege, bureaucracy, labelling, assumptions or lack of support. Here, there needs to be detailed analysis of the methodology of oppression. The primary task is to build a picture of the compound injuries from the situated knowledge of lived experience about how oppression is experienced in the particular life of the person.

Describe the protective factors that lessen the likelihood of the crash.

## 4: Describe the bio-psychosocial injuries

Describe how the person is harmed by the crash.

By now, a detailed picture of the multiple intersecting complexities of the situation or context of oppression for the person is developing. Now, the injuries of oppression are located within both the lived experience of the person and the context. The crucial function of understanding the injury at the intersection of colliding reckless vehicles of oppression is to reposition shame, blame and stigma from people to the contexts and impacts of oppression.

Describe the strengths that lessen the impact of the crash.



**For more information see:**

Nayak, S. (2022). An intersectional model of reflection: is social work fit for purpose in an intersectionally racist world? *Critical and Radical Social Work*,10(2).  
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**You may find these thoughts from those who took part in the Change Project helpful:**

- > *How your identities intersect too is so relevant in the supervisory / management / leader relationship where you are holding more power.*
- > *Part of our supervision template now asks us to discuss intersecting forms of oppression, it's opened good discussion.*
- > *In supervision I say that I am a Black woman and ask my supervisees to talk with me about how identity will be considered in their supervision.*
- > *We need to use intersectionality in meetings, in case notes, in supervision, mapping it out, and thinking about highway and vehicles.*