

## HANDOUT 2: STAGES OF INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

### HAVE-NOT IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT



#### STAGE 1: PRE-ENCOUNTER

Individual absorbs many of the beliefs and values of the dominant 'have' culture, including the idea that it is "better" to be a 'have'. May value role models, lifestyles, value systems of the dominant group more highly than those of one's own culture. Often seeks to assimilate and be accepted by the 'have's'. Tends to minimize the personal/social significance of race/gender/class etc.

**Narrative: "Who/how do I need to be to succeed/survive?"**

#### STAGE 2: ENCOUNTER

Transition to this stage is typically precipitated by an event or series of events that forces the individual to acknowledge the personal impact of oppression. Anger, confusion, and alienation are common emotions. Aware of rejection by the majority group, the individual begins to grapple with what it means to be a member of a group targeted by oppression. Initial attempts to define one's intersectional identity may be based on internalized stereotypes about own group. Process often begins in early adolescence.

**Narrative: "What does it mean to belong? Where and with whom do I belong? What does it mean to be a person of colour in this country and how is that reflected in my life – friends, choices, recreation time etc**

#### STAGE 3: IMMERSION/EMERSION

Characterized by the desire to surround oneself with visible symbols of one's intersectional identity, and an active avoidance of symbols of 'have' culture. At the beginning of this stage, there is a tendency to categorically reject 'have's' and glorify one's own group. Individual actively seeks out opportunities to learn about his/her own history and culture with the support of same-group peers. Anger may subside because focus is on group and self-exploration. Results in a newly defined and affirmed sense of self.

**Narrative: "I need to know who I am. I need to understand my history"**

#### STAGE 4: INTERNALIZATION

Characterized by a sense of security in one's own racial/ethnic identity. Able to view his/her own group more objectively, as well as other racial/ethnic groups. Willing to establish meaningful relationships with whites who acknowledge and are respectful of his/her self- definition and is also ready to build coalitions with members of other oppressed groups.

**Narrative: I know who I am. I am proud of my own racial identity. I have a strong sense of self and self-worth**

#### STAGE 5: COMMITMENT

A personal sense of intersectional identity(ties) is translated into a plan of action and/or a general sense of commitment and solidarity to own group, sustained over time

**Narrative: I know I am part of a wider movement, and can choose how to support the cause**