Welcome!

Workshop Goals

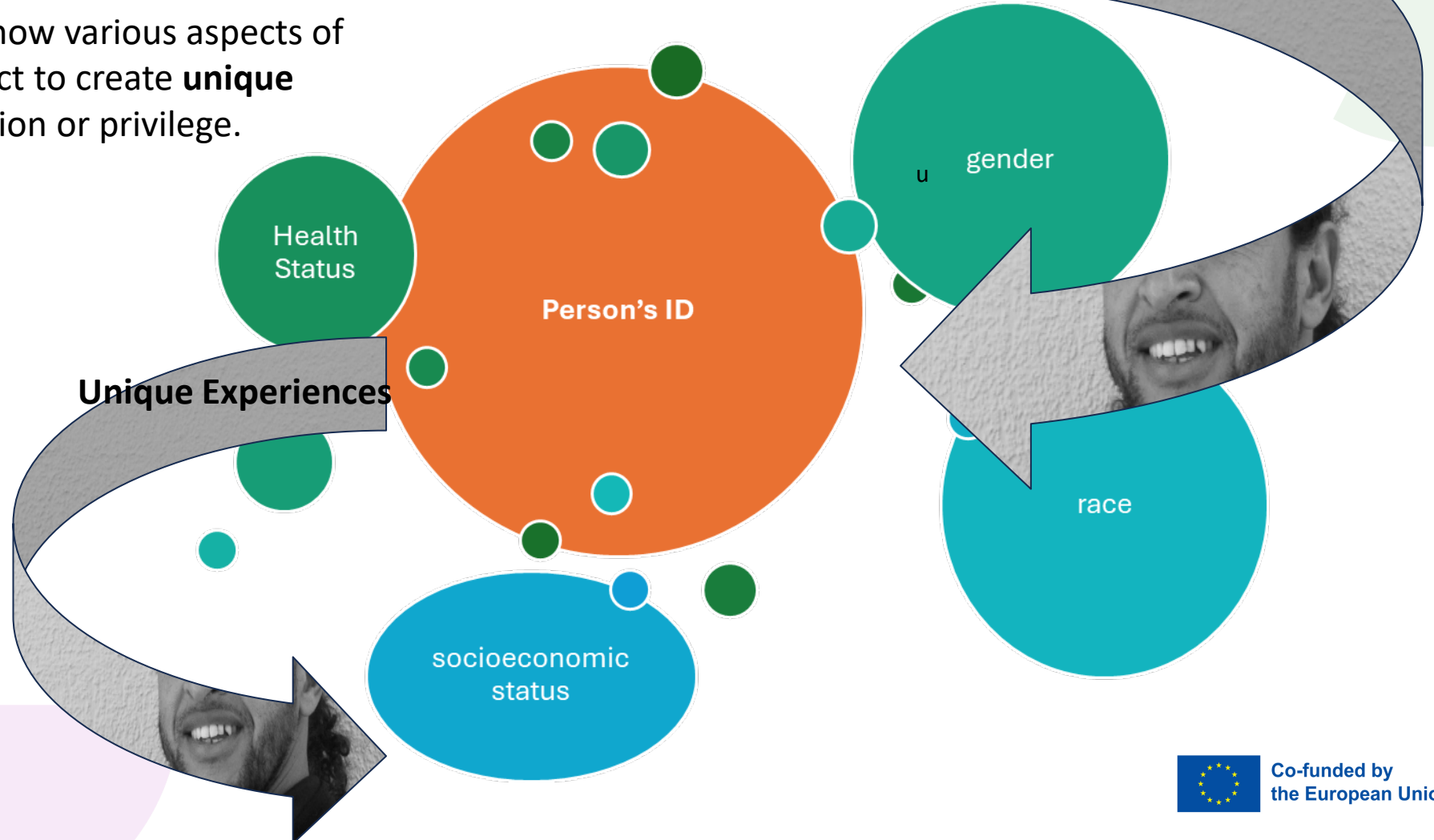| Discussing Mental Health and Psychosocial Disabilities	Exploring Precarity	Identifying Actionable Steps	Understanding Intersectionality

What is actually intersectionality?

Intersectionality refers to how various aspects of **a person's identity** intersect to create **unique experiences** of discrimination or privilege.

By understanding intersectionality, we can better appreciate the complexities of individuals' experiences and work towards more inclusive and equitable practices in mental health and beyond.

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Unique Experiences

Unique Experiences

Health Status

Person's ID

u gender

race

socioeconomic status

Unique Experiences

Intersectionality helps us understand that **people's experiences** of **discrimination** or **privilege** are shaped by the **combination** of their multiple identity markers.

For example, the experience of a Black woman with a psychosocial disability may differ significantly from that of a white woman or a Black man with the same condition.

Unique Experiences of Discrimination and Privilege

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These intersections can result in compounded **discrimination** or layered **privileges**, affecting individuals' mental health and access to support systems.

Recognizing these intersections allows for **more effective approaches** to addressing inequality and providing support.

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Try our own Mapping Personal Intersections!

Instructions

1. Inside the circle, there are aspects of your identity that usually are significant. Feel free to add any other aspect you may want.

2. Outside the circle, there are environmental or societal factors that impact you

3. Draw lines to connect aspects of your identity (inside the circle) with the environmental/societal factors (outside the circle) that influence them. Use different colors or patterns for lines to represent positive, negative, or neutral impacts.

4. Reflect on the map you've created. Consider how the intersections of your identity and environmental factors influence your experiences, opportunities, and challenges, especially concerning mental health and psychosocial disabilities.

Reflection time!

- Which intersections have the most significant impact on your mental health or psychosocial well-being?

- How do these intersections affect your access to resources or support?

- In what ways can understanding these intersections help us support ourselves and others more effectively?

Common Mental Health Conditions

Depression

sadness, loss of interest, and a range of emotional and physical problems.
Fatigue, difficulty concentrating, changes in appetite, feelings of worthlessness, and thoughts of self-harm

Anxiety Disorders

feelings of anxiety and fear.
Examples: Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), Panic Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder.
Excessive worry, restlessness, fatigue, irritability, and physical symptoms like increased heart rate.

Common Mental Health Conditions

Bipolar Disorder:

extreme mood swings that include emotional highs (mania or hypomania) and lows (depression). Periods of elevated mood, increased activity or energy, and episodes of depression.

Schizophrenia:

distortions in thinking, perception, emotions, language, sense of self, and behavior.
Hallucinations, delusions, disorganized thinking, and impaired functioning.

Psychosocial Disabilities and Their Impact on Daily Life:
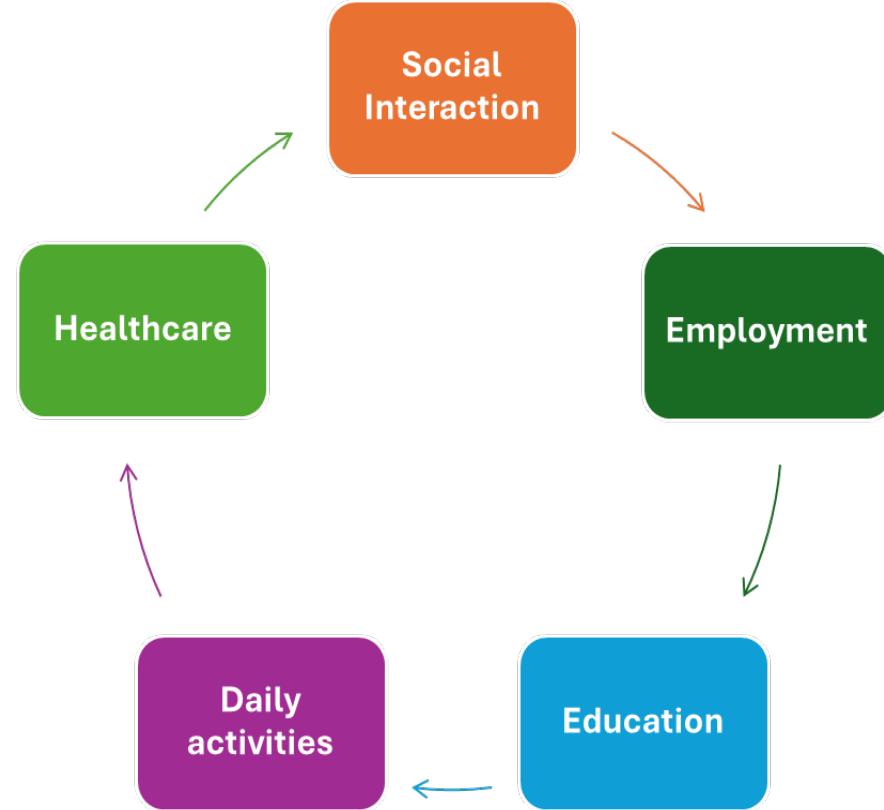
PREVALENCE:

Around 1 in 9 adults in Europe (11%) reported symptoms of psychological distress in 2018. This percentage may have increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly impacted mental well-being, particularly among young people and those with lower socio-economic status

IMPACT ON WORK:

Mental health problems, including depression and anxiety, are major contributors to lost productivity. In the EU, depression is a leading cause of disability, significantly affecting individuals' ability to work and engage in daily activities

ACCESS TO CARE:

Despite the high prevalence of mental health issues, access to mental health care varies widely across Europe. For instance, nearly 60% of adults with mental health conditions in some EU countries do not receive the necessary services (European Commission).

YOUTH STATISTICS:

Mental health issues often begin early in life. About 50% of lifetime mental illnesses start by age 14, and 75% by age 24, highlighting the need for early intervention and support for young people (European Commission) (European Commission).

Understanding Intersectionality and Its Impact

Impact on Mental Health

Marginalized Identities: Individuals with multiple marginalized identities often face compounded stressors that can lead to worse mental health outcomes. For example, a person who is both a racial minority and LGBTQ+ may experience heightened discrimination and stigma.

Access to Care: Intersectionality affects access to mental health services. People from minority groups often face barriers such as cultural stigma, lack of culturally competent care, and socioeconomic obstacles.

Stigma and Discrimination: The stigma associated with mental health issues can be exacerbated by other forms of discrimination. For instance, women of color may encounter both gender bias and racial discrimination, which can intensify the stigma and impact their willingness to seek help.

How Workplace Dynamics Influence Mental Health

Workplace Dynamics:
1. The workplace is a critical environment where dynamics such as race equity, support systems, and job security significantly influence mental health.
2. Understanding how intersectionality impacts employees' experiences is crucial for creating a supportive and inclusive work environment.

Influence on Mental Health:
1. **Discrimination**: Experiencing racial, gender, or other forms of discrimination at work can lead to chronic stress, anxiety, and depression. Discrimination not only affects mental health but also job performance and satisfaction.
2. **Lack of Support**: Employees who do not feel supported by their supervisors or colleagues, or who lack access to mental health resources, are more likely to experience mental health issues. This is especially true for those with intersecting marginalized identities.
3. **Job Insecurity**: Uncertainty about job stability can be a significant source of stress. For individuals already facing discrimination or marginalization, job insecurity can exacerbate mental health challenges.

Discrimination:

1. **Racial Discrimination**: Employees of color may face microaggressions, biased evaluations, and exclusion from opportunities, leading to feelings of isolation and increased stress.
2. **Gender Discrimination**: Women, particularly women of color, may encounter gender bias that affects their mental health and career progression.

Lack of Support:

1. **Insufficient Mental Health Resources**: Workplaces that do not provide adequate mental health resources or accommodations can leave employees struggling to manage their conditions.
2. **Inadequate Diversity Training**: A lack of training on diversity and inclusion can perpetuate a non-supportive environment for marginalized employees.

Job Insecurity:

1. **Precarious Employment**: Employees in unstable or temporary positions often face higher stress levels due to uncertainty about their future.
2. **Economic Disparities**: Socioeconomic challenges can compound the effects of job insecurity, especially for employees from disadvantaged backgrounds.

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FACTS!

- **Mental Health Impact**: Employees who experience discrimination are more likely to report poor mental health. For example, 45% of Black employees have reported experiencing discrimination at work, which correlates with higher levels of stress and anxiety (https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org).

- **Access to Resources**: Only 34% of employees say their company provides adequate mental health resources, with significant disparities among racial and gender lines (https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org).

- **Job Insecurity:** Workers in precarious jobs are twice as likely to suffer from mental health issues compared to those in secure employment. This statistic is even higher for marginalized groups (https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org).

- *By addressing race equity and understanding the intersectionality of employees' identities, organizations can foster a healthier, more supportive workplace environment that benefits everyone's mental health.*

Psychosocial Disabilities and Precarity

Understanding Psychosocial Disability

Impact on Individuals:

- Impairs ability to work, maintain relationships, and participate fully in society.
- Can include conditions like depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and PTSD.

Exacerbating Factors:

- Social stigma and discrimination.
- Lack of access to mental health services.
- Inadequate support systems.
- Socioeconomic factors (e.g., poverty, unemployment).
- Experiences of trauma or violence.

Examples of Environmental Exacerbation:

- Stigma leading to social isolation.
- Lack of access to mental health services due to financial barriers.
- Limited support networks due to societal attitudes toward mental illness.

Let's Play!

Strategies for Inclusivity:

- **Accessible Resources**: Ensure that resources, facilities, and information are accessible to all individuals, including those with disabilities or diverse needs.
- **Supportive Policies**: Implement policies that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of organizational culture and operations.
- **Awareness Training**: Provide training programs to increase awareness and understanding of diverse perspectives, including issues related to mental health and disabilities.

Examples of Inclusive Practices:

•**Reasonable Accommodations**: Offer reasonable accommodations to employees or individuals with disabilities to ensure equal opportunities and access.

•**Mental Health Days**: Implement policies that recognize and support mental health needs, such as allowing employees to take time off for self-care when necessary.

•**Inclusive Communication Practices**: Foster an environment of open communication and respect by using inclusive language, actively listening to diverse view

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Conclusion(s)

Summary of Main Points from the Workshop

Understanding Intersectionality: Intersectionality, the convergence of various identity markers like race, gender, and socioeconomic status, profoundly influences mental health outcomes and experiences of discrimination or privilege.

Impact on Mental Health: Intersectionality shapes mental health stigma, access to care, and workplace dynamics. Examples highlight how race and gender intersect to influence mental health experiences and disparities in the workplace.

Mapping Personal Intersections: Through a guided exercise, you had the opportunity to explore how our intersecting identities affect your mental health and identified support systems or gaps.

Psychosocial Disabilities and Precarity: Psychosocial disabilities, exacerbated by social environments, necessitate inclusive strategies like accessible resources, supportive policies, and awareness training to foster inclusive environments.

Actionable Steps

Advocacy: Stand up for yourself and others by advocating for inclusive policies, challenging discrimination, and promoting mental health awareness in your workplace and community.

Creating Support Networks: Build and nurture supportive relationships with colleagues, friends, and family members who understand and validate your experiences. Joining support groups or online communities can also provide valuable connections and resources.

Continuous Learning: Commit to ongoing education and self-reflection to deepen your understanding of intersectionality, mental health, and social justice issues. Engage in reading, attending workshops or webinars, and participating in discussions to stay informed and informed.

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