

## Sound Connections Power and Privilege exercise

### A bit of context...

Back in February 2020 we were planning for an event called *Inclusive Practice in Action: Power & Privilege*, which was a moment to reflect on what we had been learning about social justice over a number of years. Here we share an exercise developed and tested with the team and Trustees at Sound Connections – it's one of many things designed to help us with our ongoing social justice journey.

Our Music and Social Justice Network has provided a space in which to learn more about injustice (so far we've focused on intersectionality, racism, whiteness, sexism and injustice imposed on young people). One of the main things we've become more conscious of is that without understanding our own identity, including the power and privilege we hold, it is difficult to notice and change ways in which we're upholding structural injustice. The more privilege we have, the less likely it is we'll realise if we are behaving in an exclusionary way. In the workplace, to create an inclusive and welcoming environment we must understand how and why people are different to us, and potentially adjust our expectations and ideas about what's acceptable in order that everyone can be themselves.

### The exercise

The exercise suggested is very introspective with the aim of helping us to become more self-aware and self-critical. With this in mind, there is no expectation that you will share your answers with anyone else.

Firstly here are two things to read and watch that we have found useful:

<https://everydayfeminism.com/2014/09/what-is-privilege/>

<https://www.facebook.com/novaramedia/videos/113018366757996/>

(There are many more resources about power and privilege online, and you can find a list of articles, podcasts, books etc on the Sound Connections resources page).

After that, try asking yourself these questions:

1. How do I self-identify? What is my position in the world and what privileges do I enjoy?
2. How might my position and privilege influence the way I speak to and build relationships with other people, particularly if they are different to me, eg in terms of age, gender, race, class, sexuality or have physical or neurological differences to me?
3. Do I make assumptions about people? How does this affect the way I speak to them?
4. Am I trying to hold or assert power? If so, why? Does this manifest in body language or tone of voice?
5. Do I feel powerless? If so, what would help me feel more powerful? What do I need from other people for me to feel more powerful?

To help answer the questions you might want to focus on a particular meeting or conversation and think about how you felt or behaved in that situation. Don't feel you have to answer every question; they are just prompts.

If you would like to share your thoughts, we'd love to hear about the following:

- How you found doing the exercise
- Anything you'll do differently as a result
- Ways in which we could build on this – further work individually and collectively

Please do get in touch. For us this has been one way to develop our thinking together. We are very open to the exercise being challenged or developed and look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for reading,

The Sound Connections team

[info@sound-connections.org.uk](mailto:info@sound-connections.org.uk)