
Decolonize Your Practice!

This is a checklist (of some) of the areas of your therapy practice where you can begin using an anti-oppressive, liberatory and decolonizing lens.



silvana espinoza lau / [decolonize your practice](#)

***"embodied decolonization
requires honesty,
accountability, compassion,
patience, and distress
tolerance".***



Reading through this checklist will give you an idea of the areas of your therapy practice you can begin decolonizing. You won't simply be checking things off the list. What you'll be doing is exploring whether your current practices/modes of operating as a clinician reflect what you are envisioning as your anti-oppressive practice. And what is more, in this process you are also reflecting within yourself to see what parts you need to decolonize to make this an embodied and wholesome process. This is just the beginning of a life-long process of embodied unlearning and decolonization.

WHAT DO I WANT TO DECOLONIZE?



1

Your practice

The business itself, whether a brick and mortar office or an online practice. What is the ethos of your business and what is the message you are sending to clients and colleagues?

2

Your treatment

Your clinical work with your clients. What are the approaches you use? Is it an EBP? Is it white and Western centered? Do you measure progress or healing?

3

Your interactions with your clients

Or what we call rapport. What is your relationship like with your clients? Are you acknowledging the power you hold as a mental health provider?

WHAT DO I WANT TO DECOLONIZE?



4

Your interactions with colleagues

Especially those whose identities have been historically underrepresented and/or marginalized. And how do you engage with privileged colleagues, do you call them in or call them out?

5

Your interactions with bosses or supervisors

Unlearn what it means to be a "productive employee". Can you actually set boundaries and make honest requests without fear of retaliation?

6

Your interactions with supervisees and students

Do you acknowledge hierarchies and power dynamics. Are you available and present for supervisees and/or students? Can you engage in honest rupture and repair?

WHAT DO I WANT TO DECOLONIZE?



7

Your interactions with employees

Become aware of the power dynamics in the room. Can your employees give you honest feedback? What are you doing beyond posting a "J.E.D.I." statement?

8

Your interactions with peers, friends, and acquaintances

Don't just decolonize your professional self. How can you be in a decolonized relationship with the people in your personal life?

9

Yourself

Bring empathy and compassion into your relationship with all of your parts. Which of your identities are still unlearning culturally imposed norms? Are your personal and professional selves integrated?

HOW DO I START TO DECOLONIZE MY PRACTICE?

Get in touch with
your identities:
know your LOS
(see below).

Be aware and in
relationship with all
the emotions this
will trigger.


Move to action:
choose one thing
you will change in
your practice.

One important step is to be aware of your social locations (or LOS: Location of Self). Your social locations are all your identities. And being aware of your identities is a key element in the process of addressing issues of oppression. Your LOS will also inform you about the cultural gaps between you and your clients. This will allow you to authentically show up for clients.

REMEMBER:

Your social locations impact how you see the world. You can never leave your identities outside the therapy room. Decolonizing your identities requires unlearning our white/western education. It is a lifelong journey that requires tons of self-exploration, curiosity, empathy, patience, and compassion.

DO YOU NEED SUPPORT THROUGHOUT THIS JOURNEY?



If you have signed up for my newsletter, you will be among the first to know about a program I am launching. It is called:

DECOLONIZE YOUR PRACTICE!

This is an 8-week program where you and a small group of like-minded peers will support each other in decolonizing your practices in ways that make sense to you.

SIGN UP FOR MY NEWSLETTER!
