



Mediating Conflicts Involving Competing Marginalizations

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Why this workshop

Mediating conflicts involving competing marginalizations complexifies the process.

- We want to honour people's lived experience of being harmed.
- Mediators can be accused of preferencing one person's marginalization over another, or of preferencing communication/soft skills over truth telling.
- Navigating conversations re marginalization can create self-doubt re: our own values.
- Conflicts involving marginalization can involve deep pain.



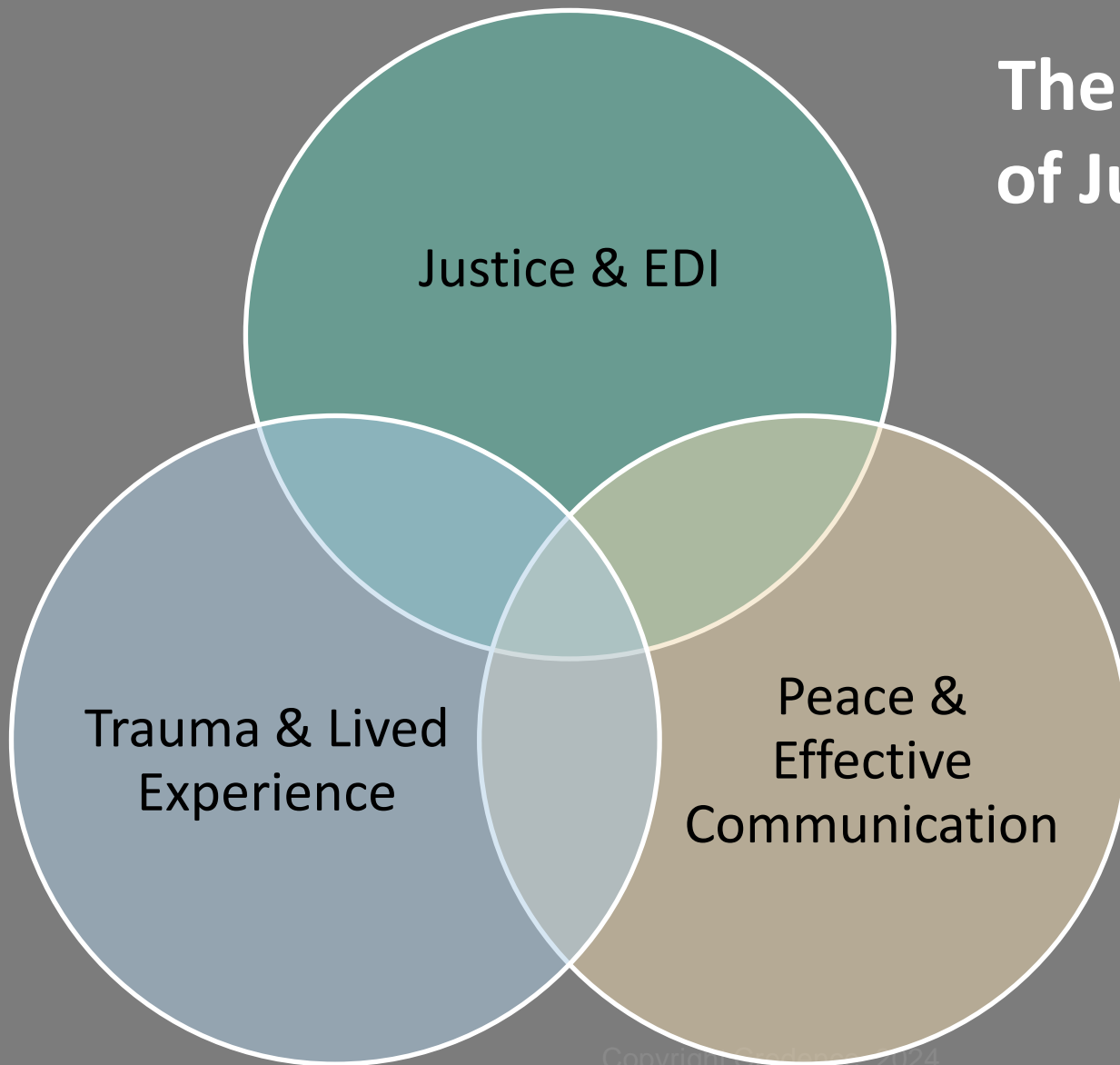
Why this workshop

Mediation

- Process invites effective listening & helps people speak in ways others can hear them.
- Conversations about marginalization asks mediators to allow hard conversations about justice & people's trauma re: marginalization.

These two foci are not mutually exclusive but can require focused mediator energies & strategies.

The Venn Diagram of Justice, Peace & Trauma

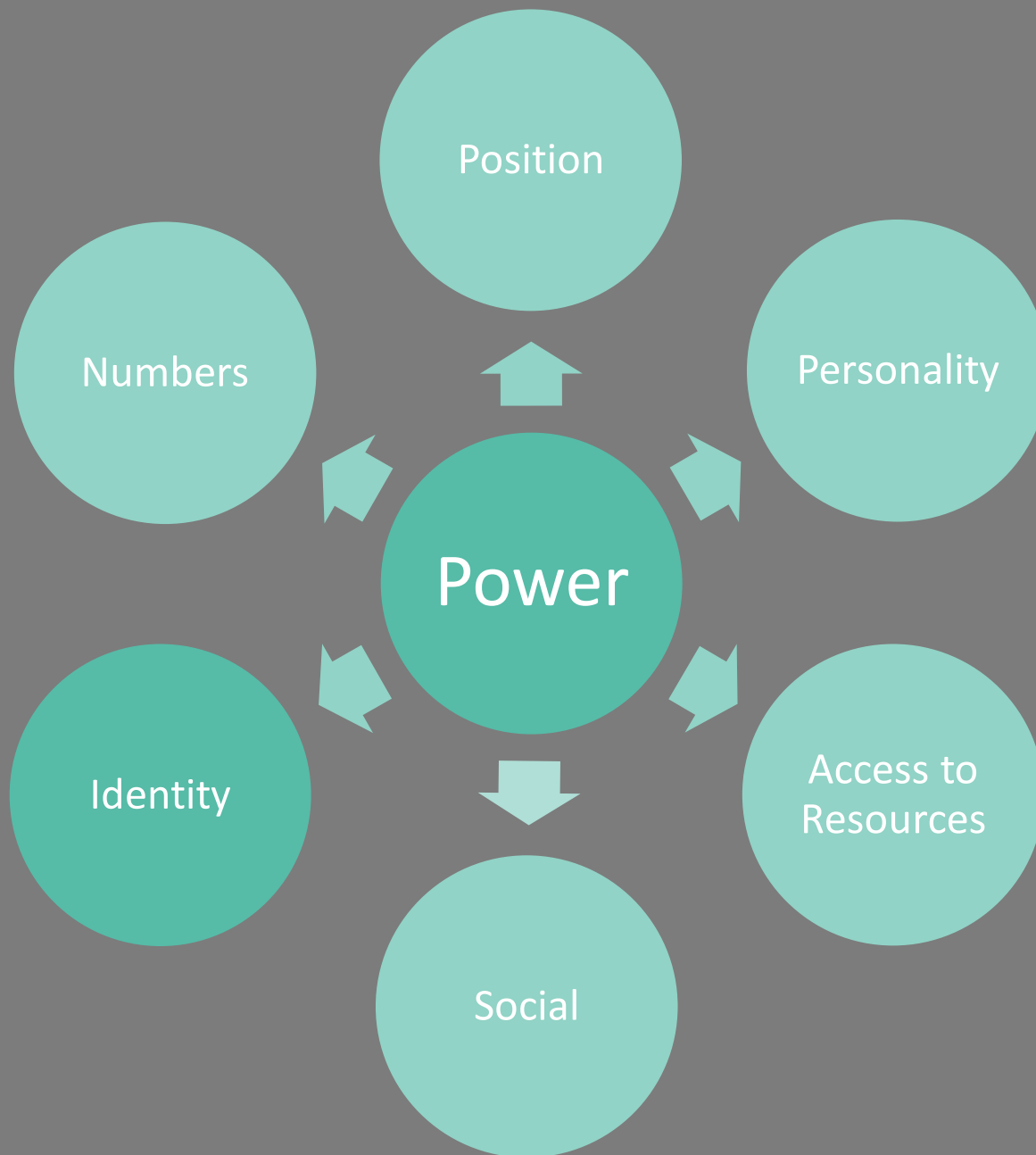




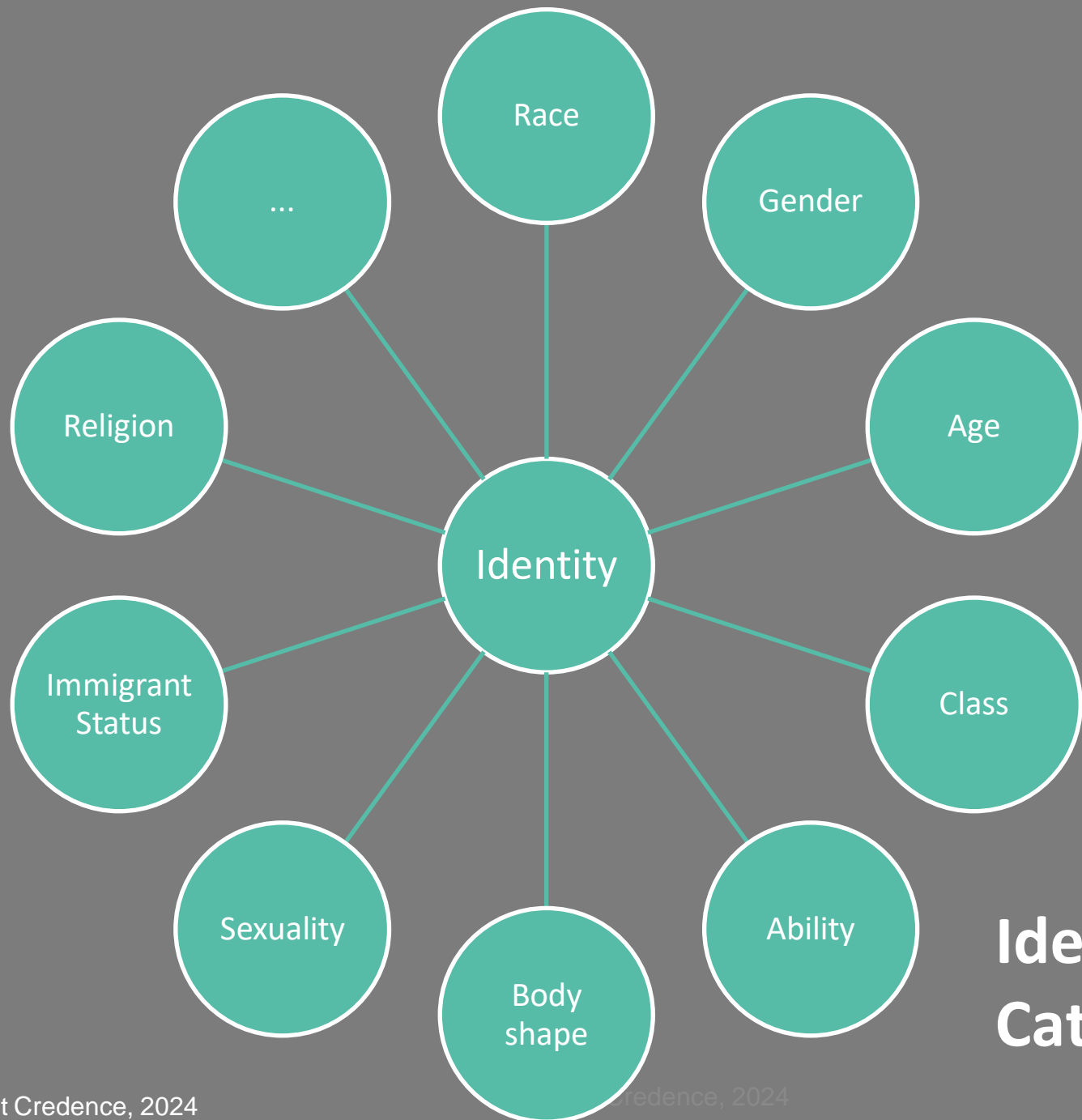
Defining Marginalization

Marginalization involves the conscious or unconscious preference of one person or group over another because of the identity groups to which the persons or groups belong.

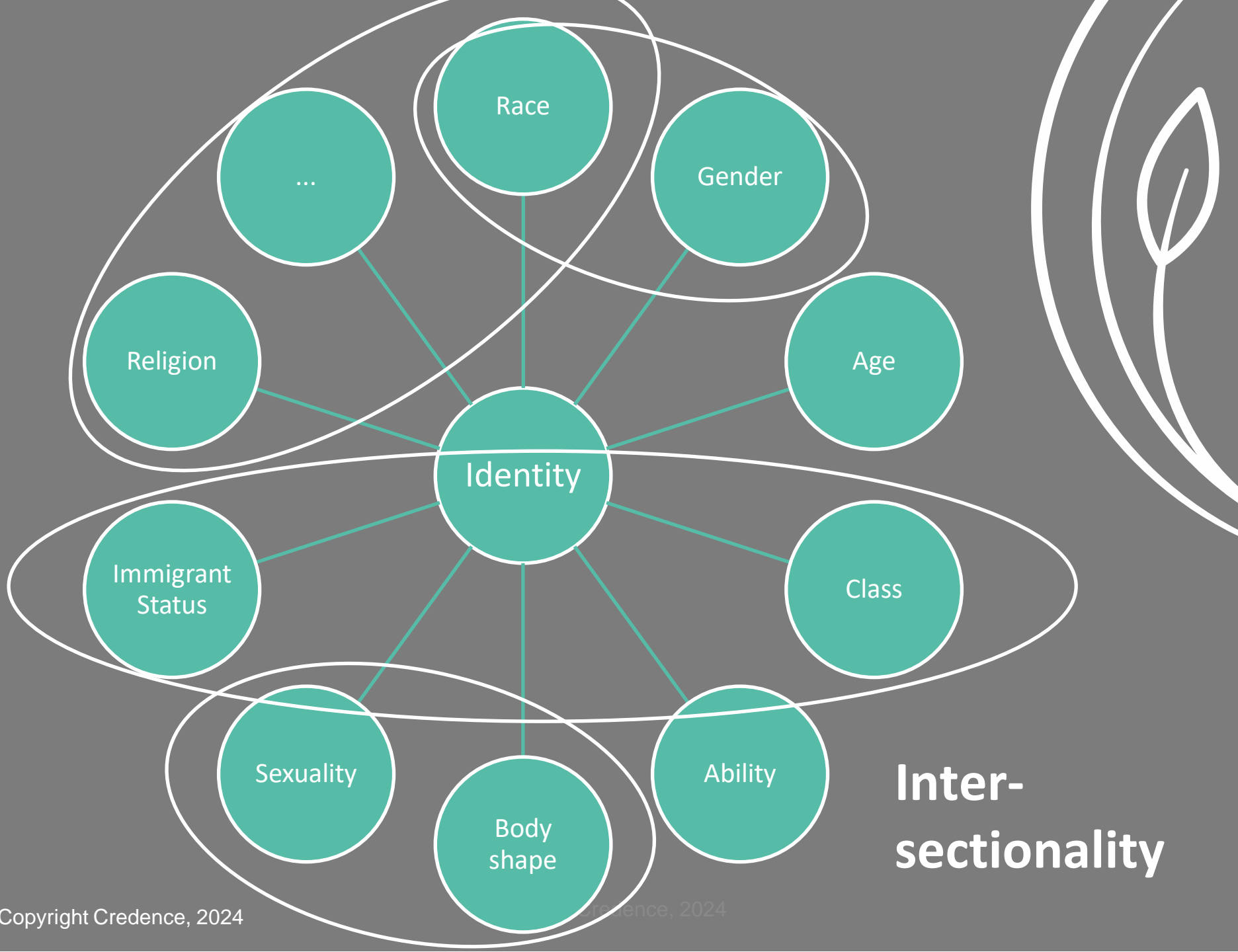
Can include treating people with disdain; as insignificant, peripheral, unimportant.
Can lead to acts of harm.



Power: Ability to affect change; can be given to some & withheld from others



Identity Categories



Inter- sectionality

Otherizing



Us

It reflects our character.

We were forced into it, or we were having a bad day.

Them

They were forced into it, or it was unusual for them.

It reflects their character.

Otherizing



Us

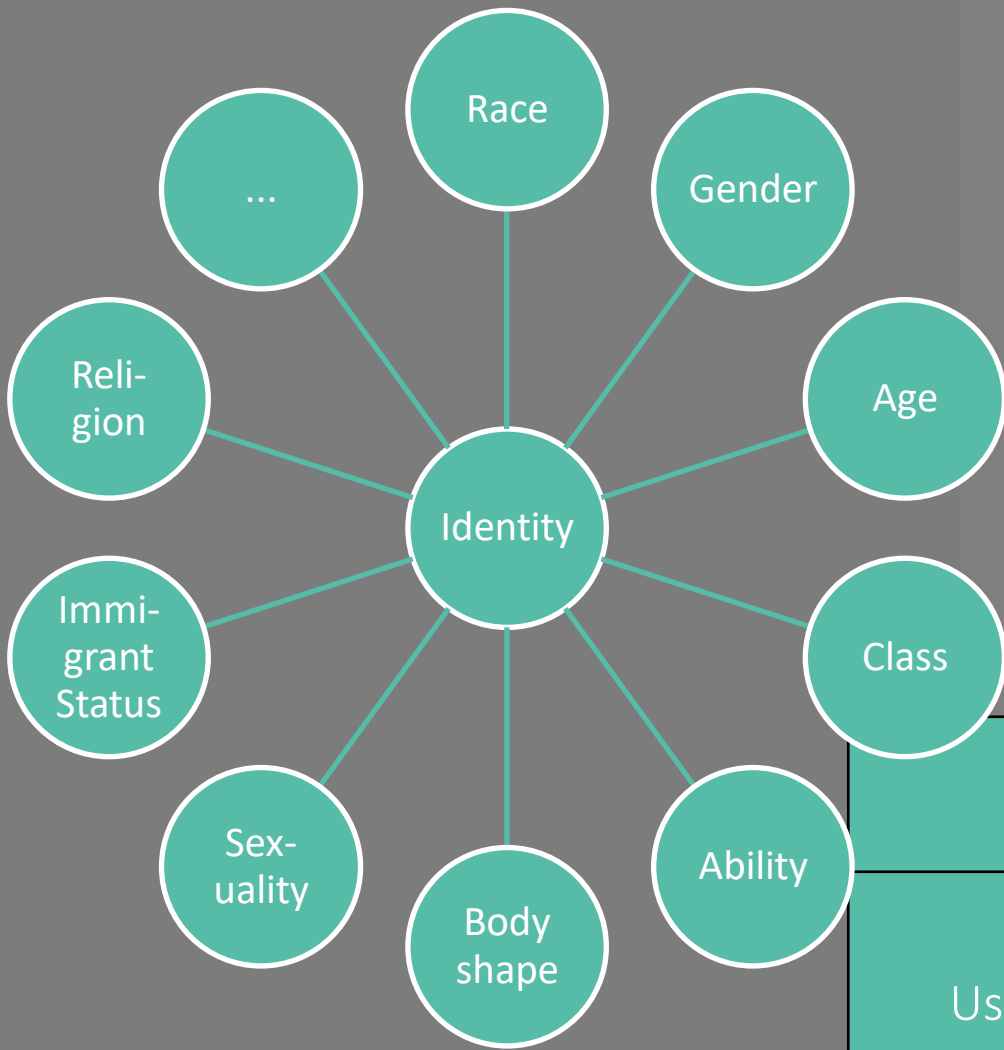
We are
logical/consistent.

Our bad people & bad
ideas are one-offs.

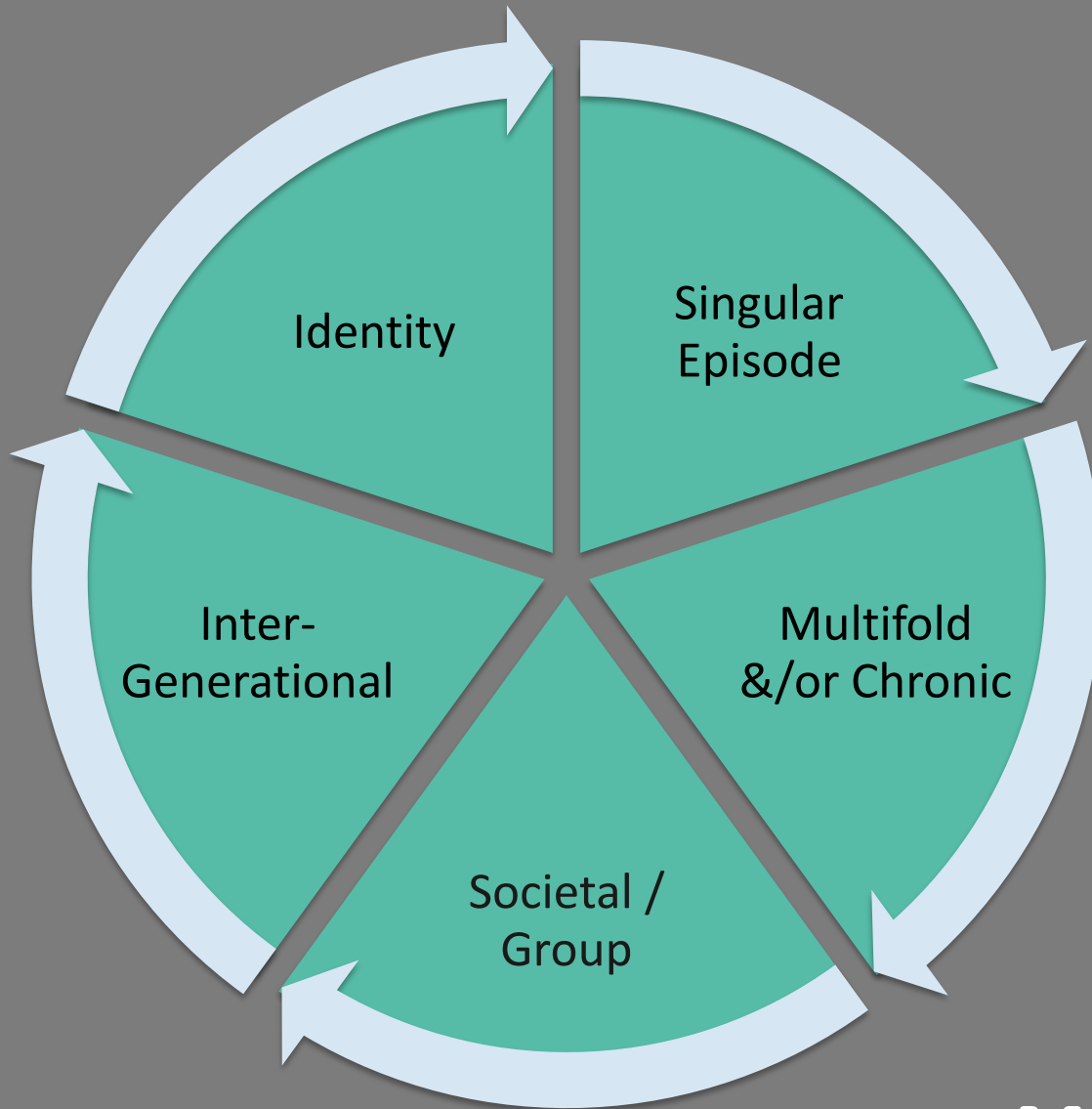
Them

Their good people &
good ideas are one-
offs.

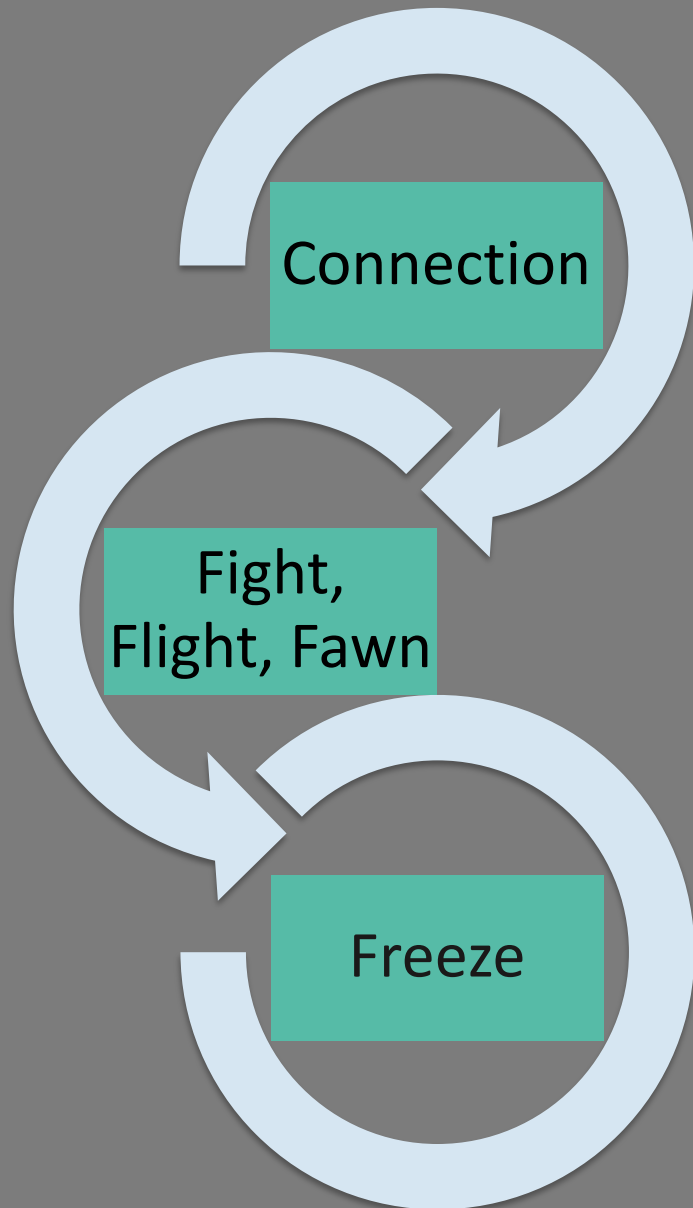
They are illogical/
inconsistent.



	😊	☹️
Us	Reflects us.	Forced.
Them	Forced.	Reflects them.



**Trauma &
Marginalization**



3 Responses to Human Experience

Traumatic experiences tend to land us in fight, flight, fawn, or freeze – this impacts our ability to navigate conflict.



Trauma, Marginalization & Conflict

When conflict involving competing traumas & marginalizations happens, is it...

1. Triggered historical marginalization / trauma & unrelated to current situation?
2. Related to current trauma / marginalization?
3. Unrelated to trauma or marginalization?
4. All three? Two of three?



Trauma, Marginalization & Conflict

When conflict involving competing traumas & marginalizations happens...

- With whose experience of marginalization do you start? Why?
- How do you support an environment where parties are open to hearing the other's experience of marginalization?



Trauma, Marginalization & Conflict

With whose experience of marginalization do you start? Why?

- On this people are not agreed.
- Where does power lie?
- Who has greatest capacity? Prepare people for this.
- Do people need a heart-level conversation before a head-level conversation?



Trauma, Marginalization & Conflict

How do you support an environment where parties are open to hearing the other's experience of marginalization?

- Pre- & post-mediation Coaching
- Pre-mediation “supported” journaling
- Invitation to explore own marginalization (in coaching) prior to being asked to acknowledge others' marginalization.
- Speak to where they are on the polarization spectrum.

Engaging Polarization related to Marginalization



Highly
Polarized

Connect,
then
challenge

Somewhat
Polarized

Engage
Dialogue

Not So
Polarized

Invite
Action

Trauma, Marginalization & Conflict

- **Attend** to your own experiences of marginalization.
- **Think Personally:** What type of support do individuals experiencing trauma & marginalization need?
- **Exercise Boundaries and Grace:** Be willing, in coaching, to connect and appropriately challenge. In mediation, hold to your guidelines.
- **Scaffold Conversations:** In coaching, meet people at the “beginning” of their pain story and walk forward from there.

Trauma, EDIA Principles & Conflict

- **Lean on One Another:** This work is tough; it is wise not to navigate it alone. Lean on other mediators to think it through.
- **Be Transparent:** Let people know the mediation you are making during coaching and in the mediation process & why.
- **Use Coaching:** Coaching can allow you to have important 1:1 conversations to equip people to navigate the mediation session well.

Trauma, EDIA Principles & Conflict

- **Build Trust:** Start with the heart not the head.
- **Keep Multiple “Screens” Open in your Brain:** Analyze the situation through lenses of power, EDIA, trauma, marginalization, conflict, system, personality, culture.
- **Support:** Those receiving trauma-driven anger may need help separating their selfhood / goodwill from the trauma response.
- **Love the People you are Leading:** Practice Unconditional Positive Regard.